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EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Dime Novels

A GOOD deal of nonsense has been written lately about dime novels. Like other junk left over from the last century—pressed glass dishes, student lamps, machine-turned candlesticks, china dogs—they have risen with the rest of the antique market, and are given an inflated value as Americana. They were cheap in all senses once; now they are cheap only in one.

It might be supposed that all of our best writers and best readers were raised on a diet of dime novels back of the barn, and are indebted to Nick Carter, Frank Merriwell, and the Grizzly Hunters of the Rockies for whatever vigor of imagination they possess. Far from it. Dime novels in the '80's and the '90's, like cheap movies now, were written for minds too ignorant or too lazy to take any more imaginative kind of excitement. All boys and most girls read them now and then just because (very wisely) most of them were forbidden to look at the gaudy little sheets. But the steady readers were those for whom Henty, Oliver Optic, Mayne Reid, and Frank Stockton were inaccessible or too difficult. They are amusing now to the sophisticated intelligence—their quaint, stiff English of melodrama is laughable, their absurd plots are funny—but no child who was given even half a chance at the good exciting books of English literature—"The Moonstone," "Lorna Doone," "Tom Sawyer," "Guy Mannering," "The Last of the Mohicans," ever battened on dime novels for more than the furtive half hour before he felt the padding beneath the sensation, and quit. For after all a dime novel was just a romantic story of adventure written badly by a hack who had neither the time nor the ability to construct a good story, and hence used the same two or three formulas, not only in every narrative, but in every chapter too. We still have plenty of dime novels, but they sell for $2.50.

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The worst specimens of our cheap movie melodrama and sentimentality may, in the next age, also be romanticized. In plot, character, theme, and method they are exactly identical with the dime novel, and, in their own way, even more naïve. With more justice too, because there was a real excitement in seeing the moron's dream world of sure success, easy happiness, and constant excitement, come true in shapes of moving life.

We deplore the effect on the young of the tawdry sentimentality and insidious materialism which seems to spread from Hollywood like a defilement through the films, just as our parents deplored the dime novels as representing demi-literacy and semi-civilization. The alarm is probably needless. A very little good reading, a very few good plays, will protect the child whose mind is not of the same quality as the movies from any real harm. No one was ever much hurt by reading dime novels, and no education is going to suffer from a moderate dose of the movies, provided that other standards and other nourishment is available. But taste and a civilized attitude, and certainly imagination, are certainly not formed either way, except in the most primitive. As for the dime novels, they belong in the youth of the generation that is just about old enough to boast how wicked and how worthless were its (really) rather dull and exemplary boyish years.

And yet so much unmitigated trash in $2.50 novels and $1.25 movies is gulped down by the plump and pouched philistines of this generation, whom the advertisers describe as hairy-chested, red-blooded he-men—so much brain wash, slip-slop, hokum, slush, so much cheap vice and stale wisecrack, so much drummer's idealism, back-house wit, servile morality, and rotten-fruit sentiment—that it does sometimes seem that a good proportion of our male population over forty did get whatever taste in represented life they possess from the dime novel and nothing else. This, if true, is socially significant, but no more romantic than the survival of the cuspidor or the cherished memory of the old tobacco plug preserved in the chewed end of a twenty-five cent cigar.

Things done, no matter how irrelevant to what we may consider as the mode of civilization, are worth remembering because once they were, but things merely written and written badly have no such sanction.

Fire, do your duty!

Spirit and Reality

By JOHN HALL WHEELOCK

SILENCE, silence—and trembling. Not a sound.
The arch of heaven is heavy with its stars.
This is the universe of life and death,
The sole Reality, the shining All.

How many generations now are dust,
That looked upon this thing! How many more
Shall look upon you, everlasting truth,
After these eyes are sealed! And shall you burn,
Altered no whit, over me altered? No—
For the brief spirit that regards you here
Gives glory to your light. O trembling flames,
Reticent loveliness, august design!
You lived in me and here in me you die,
Losing once more the meaning of yourself.

This Week

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"The American Scholar."
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"The Black Venus."
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Next Week, or Later

One More Against the Gods.
By CHRISTOPHER WARD.

Aboriginal Fiction*

By MARY AUSTIN

IN the course of the last quarter of a century American Literature has suffered a great impoverishment. The disappearance by desiccation of all those tropes and turns of speech, the familiar figures of a European inheritance which still, on a soil that produced them, are current for the fundamental concepts that never at any period yield themselves to exact statement, has been going on for a much longer time. Such coins, once ringing with the pure metal of faith, minted out of ancestral myth making, out of a shared religious past, have been made to serve, even after the image and the superscription have been obliterated by uses that have nothing in common with their originating concepts. To the generation that has most need of them, they have become not only unsuitable for purposes of spiritual exchange, but misleading. So that what we have here in the United States is a culture that presents itself as wanting in the experiences, the outlook, for which, in fact, it merely lacks a vocabulary. In this extremity, youth, which in the United States is as much troubled as youth is wont to be with the question of destiny an[illegible] problem of life-adventure, falls back on th[illegible] money of psychoanalysis, the promissory not[illegible] science, not underwritten even by its own ap[illegible], words, phrases, clichés of rootless intellectuation, which even as they are coined crumble and rot out of the literature which makes use of them. As for those shining, indescribable figures by means of which the elder poets and prophets managed to convey the inexpressible, they have become so reduced in the general estimate that the employment of them advertises our poverty by the tawdriness of their effect.

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That people is in a bad way indeed, which has no spiritual concepts too fresh for exact definition, nor any experience too ebullient to be contained in even the most exquisite of set moulds. The need of figures of speech which have in them principles of growth, which vibrate and bourgeon, which glow and darkle and change color, which in the hands of the individual take on all the amplification of which the individual is capable, is sharp in a living society. There is a demand in any fecund culture, any emergent literature, for figures, fables, types, precedents clarified by the esthetic impulse, saturate with the common experience, such as for Europe have been drawn from the treasury of racial, and genetically localized, mythology, Christian and pagan. It is doubtful if such a vocabulary can ever be drawn from any other source than the continuing adventure which ties a people to the soil upon which it develops its characteristic expression.

Where, then, we ask ourselves, shall this engrafted people, cut off from the stream of ideation on which it fed, in a land in which the formative influences are so diverse, so incapable of a unified representative expression, hit upon the constituting elements of such a medium of spiritual change? Where indeed, but among the aboriginal peoples who here, as in Europe, mediated the environment for the races which attained cultural fulfilment on the self-same soil? Neither of the two misapprehensions which have hindered our coming into fruitful touch with the imaginative life of our own aboriginals are any longer admissible. The first of these, that all aboriginals are necessarily inferior to even the most arrested members of sophis-

* TALES OF THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN. Selected and Annotated by Stith Thompson. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1929. $6.

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ticated society, is no longer held to be debatable. The second, that the surviving cultures of Europe are closer of kin to the aboriginals of whose spiritual vocabulary they have made such good use, than we Americans are to our Amerinds, has never, except in a few minor instances, been debatable. The dominant cultures of Europe are in a great measure intrusive, and are in all cases the recipients of racial admixtures which, if they do not quite parallel ours, are comparable with them. If there is any good reason, then, why we have not made use of the richly characteristic language of myth and legend, fable and human instance which has grown—not been invented, but experientially produced—out of our very soil through the instrumentality of our Amerind peoples, it must be simply because we have had no competent method of getting at it.

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This is undoubtedly the case for the moiety of our reading public most in need of such freshing of their resources of literary expression. On their behalf interest quickens toward a volume such as Stith Thompson's "Tales of the North American Indians," coming to us from the Harvard Press with the ostensible purpose of providing for the adult American an easier approach to our aboriginal literature. And it is with a sigh that, after careful reading, one lays the book aside, convinced that its success—and it is bound, with such sincerity of production, to have a certain amount of success—must lie in awakening interest in the thing that yet remains to be done rather than any direct contribution it makes to the common need.

This seems a pity, since the book opens well with a statement of the extent of our aboriginal resources, so much more complete than can now be found in any other country. There is a full, if somewhat technically notated bibliography, with comparative comment and an index of the *motifs* discussed. The selections are all from collectors whose names are sufficient guarantee of authenticity, and include a group of Indianized tales, adapted from various sources, illuminating the aboriginal mind. The one thing that is lacking, and by its lack renders much of the labor of the collection inoperative, is creative literary intelligence; as if it had never once occurred to the book's compilators that all of its ninety-six tales have come into existence and are preserved to us by that complex of intellectual, emotional, and esthetic elements, in which all literatures take their rise and assume their characteristic forms, apart from which they can not be profitably studied.

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By literary intelligence is meant, of course, that quality of intelligence necessary to the production of creative literature, cognizant not only of the relation of literary form to ordinary perceptivity, but to its primary emergence as social behavior; the sort of intelligence which is applied to the study of all literatures in relation to the society which produces them. Nor in pointing out the failure of application in the present instance, is it the writer's intention to assign to Mr. Thompson a unique position among American folklorists and ethnologists. The disposition to treat Amerindian literature as though nothing more were required for its evaluation than the ethnologist's equipment and the temperament of the collector, is fairly consistent among workers in that field. Probably it is nowhere so insistent as in the United States where the democratic prepossession works so consciously against the assumption of a special endowment of esthetic talent or intelligence. In approaching Amerindian myths and tales as though they possessed some sort of static quality which enabled them to be classified, say, as snail shells, by a right or left turn, a compressed or elongated spiral, Mr. Thompson has no more than followed a prevailing usage. What it comes to, applied to English literature, is as if William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, and Charles Garvice, having each dealt with the plot of young love in opposition to parental prejudice, should all be assigned to the same *gallerie*, and judged by such versions of their work as might be variously reported by people who had heard them recited in their youth.

This is not the way contemporaneous literatures are studied. Identical story patterns do occur in widely separated areas, but that is a by-issue not omitted from any such study. It is nowhere assumed to warrant the suppression of all other data upon which story values are predicated. Certainly it does not afford ground for assuming that stories may be profitably amputated from the cultures that produced them, or that considerations of form in aboriginal literature are wholly negligible.

In the first group of mythological tales presented in the Thompson collection, there is an example of the resultant obfuscation of issues which may well be enlarged upon. Story VI of this group is an excerpt from the outline of the Zuñi Creation myth as recorded by Frank Hamilton Cushing. Story IX is a creation myth of the Kato, from a text collected by Pliny E. Goddard. Nowhere in the book is it stated that the Zuñi myth represents not only the highest culture attained by any Amerind people north of central Mexico, but the most superior literary form achieved by any living primitive group, ranking second only to Homer, and superior to the book of Genesis. This unusual epic is still extant in four or five contemporary versions, differing only in minor particulars, that may still be heard in the Rio Grande Pueblos in undiminished splendor. The version at Taos requires four hours for its recital, two men each reciting two hours on end, the long rolling rhythms exciting the sense of the outlander unfamiliar with neither story nor language. Mr. Cushing versifies portions of it as follows, from the council of the Beloved Twins:

That earth be made safer for men and more stable,
Let us shelter the land where our children be resting,
Yea! the depths and the valleys beyond shall be sheltered
By the shade of our cloud-shield! Let us lay to its circle
Our fire-bolts of thunder, aimed to all the four regions,
Then smite with our arrows of lightning from under,
Lo, the earth shall heave upward and downward with thunder.
Lo, fire shall belch outward and burn the world over,
. . . . . .
And lessen the number of fierce preying monsters,
That the earth be made safer for men and more stable.

On the other hand, the Kato myth is a badly remembered version of a creation story at almost the other extreme of literary form, the product of a semi-nomadic people living on grass seeds and small game, reduced almost to beggary, and the complete debasement of their culture. As recorded, the myth is obviously incomplete and not in its original form. Mr. Goddard knew this. All the reputable collectors of myths know that tribal story telling can be broadly classified in two groups, stories which satisfy and illustrate the common experience, and stories which exceed that experience but are preserved because they have been affirmed in the superior minds of the tribe as in some manner rationalizing the universal mysteriousness of Nature. This dual constitution of primitive literature, this native distinction of high-brow and low-brow, has resulted in two modes of preservation, which are readily recognizable and are characteristic of all primitive story telling. On the one hand there is an informal method of relation of what is secular, exoteric; on the other, the highly formal and hieratic version of esoteric narrative. Mr. Goddard was perfectly aware that the two fragments of Kato myth which he obtained were broken down incidents of formal narrative. I also had collected a fragment of the same story which overlapped one of his, and with his help restored it to something like the original form. I quote from it:

Then the wind was not, they say,
When the waters were over the land,
There was neither frost nor snow,
Neither was there rain, they say,
Nor did it thunder, when no trees were
To bring the Thunder down, they say,
Nor did the lightning appear.

The recurrent "they say," or its equivalent, is the authenticating tag in most primitive histories, concluding each mnemonic interval. In the Omaha and Osage tribal lays recorded by Francis La Flesche, the authentication leads instead of closes the narrative intervals, each of which has its own rhythmic pattern, approaching poetic form, as may readily be gathered from the quotation, although in English the original sound patterns do not appear.

Verily at that time and place, it is said, in this house:

When the moon of the mating of deer was still young,
The Black Bear who is without blemish
Was seized with a sudden desire of hibernation.

Verily at that time and place, it is said, in this house:

Being beset and perplexed with this sudden desiring,
To and fro she ran to each of the four wind quarters,
Returning again and again to the place of starting.
After a time she paused, she stood, she considered,
Then swiftly, with hurried footsteps,
She came to the place of the bunch grass.

It is obvious that this belongs, in the evolution of literary form, between the two examples quoted above, somewhat closer to the Kato than to the Zuñi, which is about where the Osage culture would be found in a scale of social development. It is probable that all creation epics had a similar hieratic form, used in connection with tribal initiations. Though many of these originals have been lost in the breakdown of tribal cultures, they can often be traced by the literary expert in faithful transcriptions. An arrangement of such myths which would exhibit comparative literary form, would also give the key to the cultural backgrounds which produced them. Even for the folklorist's arbitrary purpose of exhibiting plot pattern, such a literary interpretation would reveal subtleties that cannot even be guessed from an unliterate jumbling together of story types.

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Every creation myth appears to start in its simplest form with an Earthmaker, frequently accompanied by an animal helper. Some sort of circumambient universe is taken for granted, and the Earthmaker is assumed to have dropped from the sky or to be left over from an earlier, unattested creation. This does well enough for the infantile stage of primitiveness. When it becomes necessary to account more fully for the earthmaker, the story begins to exfoliate *backward*, until the Maker is ensphered in successive projections of natural forces, arriving finally at the really superb Awanowilona of the Zuñi myth who "conceived within himself and thought outward into space." It is only by forcing attention on the incident of making, and omitting all other elements of the story, that Kato and Zuñi myths can be brought into a single category; as literature they are almost as far apart as Beowulf and "Paradise Lost." And this is what I mean by the application of literary intelligence to Tales of the North American Indian.

Few who have not had personal contact with primitive minds, are able to realize that the preponderance of the marvelous in aboriginal literature is, in fact, the direct expression of the innately utilitarian bent of man's mind, the primitive search for a realistic mastery of man's environment. Accustomed to think of fiction as invented for purposes of entertainment or illustration, or of the marvelous in fiction as catering merely to an infantile survival, to treat of fiction altogether as coming into existence for the sake of an audience, it becomes difficult for sophisticated man to realize that the story was, for aboriginal man whose mind was sufficiently removed from the Primal Stupidity to be aware of its own motions, often the shortest distance between realities. Everything in nature was mysterious; any inference based on what went on within himself and his fellows, which related or explained even the smallest of these mysteries, mediated the total incomprehensibility of the universe. Such inference and intuitive divinations of phenomena were likeliest to arise in the minds of superior men, and to be charged in transmission to less inventive or perceptive minds with the quality of the personality of their originators.

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Any such group of Amerind tales which survived into the time when they could be told to White men, would represent a selection from innumerable less successful guesses at the reality of nature. The paucity of means for preserving the genius flash until the average intelligence of the tribe can catch up with it, makes of the total tribal output *popular* literature in its narrowest sense. But there is always in human society the power of the transcendent personality to exceed the average experience, and by success in so doing to establish, for the profounder penetration, a prestige that preserves its formula all the more tenaciously for being less understood. In a world where all is mysterious, it is normal that the method of success should be also mysterious, to tally unaccountable except as it registers in its results. In primitive society the genius lived publicly in the aura of his intellectual superiority, and his method formularized in a story was added to the sum of tribal wisdom. Thus the Sayings of the Ancient Men became a practical guide to success, and the magical tale served precisely the same purpose that biographies of notably successful men are made to serve in our own time.

Under such conditions the point, the "happy ending," of the primitive story is the attainment of magical power. Once this is secured the story

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lapses. This explains the lack of what we call dramatic climax in aboriginal fiction. The stories are supposed to be true, practical guides to life's mysteries, and the intrusion of the teller's personality, or of his emotional reactions, would be an annoyance and an offense. For stories that are chiefly for entertainment, dramatization is encouraged; characterization, imitative dialogue, and humorous turns are freely employed. Arthur Parker, in his Skunny Wundy and Rumbling Wings stories, has given a free rendering of Indian methods of informal oral story telling, which should not have been omitted from a collection of Indian stories intended for the illumination of the lay reader.

It is this intense practicality of Amerind story which accounts for the notable lack of the love element as a determinant of story pattern. The Amerind as we know him, had not yet reached that point of sophistication at which he had persuaded himself that anything else was settled when he had selected, or been selected, by his mate. As a matter of fact, Europe did not, until after its adoption of Christianity, arrive at the coördination of sex and society in which social status and moral standing were incorporated with the act of marriage and offered as evidence of the arrival of the hero at a fixed point in his career. The sex impulse never, in primitive life, developed the tension, the overtones which characterize it in more complex societies, but practically all the situations which are found in sophisticated literature, although they do not occur so frequently, may be discovered among our native tribes. Indians die for love and kill for love, suffer jealousy and many violations of their own tribal codes. The one exception is the complete renunciation of family life because of disappointment in love, although I have known instances in which a faithful attachment for one person existed along with marriage to another, without violation or jealousy. The distinguishing difference between primitive marriage and sophisticated marriage as literary material is that in the former marriage never achieves a determining force in respect to the life pattern.

Without the keys to the meaning of aboriginal myths in North America (of which I have indicated but a few—no more than enough to make it unnecessary to insist that they are primarily the keys which unlock all story systems) an a *priori* concept of the universe; the cultural status out of which they rise; the relation of tribal thought forms to literary styles—it is difficult to see how the people of the United States are to arrive at any just appreciation of the treasures of beginning literary art which are theirs. It is unfortunate that those scholars who occupy themselves with the collection and preservation of our aboriginal art should so generally refuse or neglect the coöperation of scholars whose work is about art in all its manifestations. The past of any civilized art nowhere appears in entirety, but must be pieced together out of all possible resources. That we have here within our borders so large a fragment of this inestimable fabric, and in many particulars so nearly intact, should be the incentive to the happiest use of it in reinforcing our native modes of expression. But such use can never be made so long as knowledge of Amerind art is presented to us only in dead castings of its own living form. What one would have liked to see issue from any of our great universities is a series of Indian interpretations which would employ all the instrumentalities engendered by scholarship in its vital relations to American life, all the instrumentalities it is the avowed purpose of universities to make workable and familiar. This, Mr. Thompson's volume scarcely does. The most that its compilers could be justified in hoping for it is that it will incite to that completer achievement which will release its invaluable material to a more general acceptance.

Clemenceau in dramatic guise appeared on the Berlin stage recently when "Die Affäre Dreyfus" ("The Dreyfus Case"), by René Kestner, a pseudonym for two young Berlin dramatists, was received with great enthusiasm at the People's Theatre, the present home in Berlin of the political play. Zola is the hero, Count Esterhazy the villain, Dreyfus himself is the puppet round which intrigue centres, there is a fine scene in the court of justice. and Jaurès and other popular idols and enemies of the people play their historical parts. There is no interference with the facts of French history, and the make-up is according to the best-known portraits.

"Arteried with Light"

FIREHEAD. By LOLA RIDGE. New York: Payson & Clarke. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

IF all of "Firehead" attained the level of its second half, Lola Ridge's new work would not only be reckoned her largest (which it undoubtedly is) but one of the most impressive creations of any American poet. In conception it is huge, in composition daring, in imagination rich as a Florentine fresco. It is only in execution that critical reservation voices its objectionable note. "Firehead" pits itself against all the passion-plays, against the Biblical drama itself, by confining the action to the day of the Crucifixion. The background is Golgotha; the soliloquies are human, mystical, super-terrestrial; the characters range from John to Judas, from the unborn Thaddeus to the undying Christ. Thus where Miss Ridge fails, she fails on a level far higher than most accomplished successes and her difficult triumphs are to be ap-

LOLA RIDGE

plauded far more than the quick victories of a facile theme.

The subject presents innumerable problems—ethical, spiritual, technical—and Miss Ridge shirks none of them. On the contrary, she refuses to take advantage of the obviously dramatic aspects and sacrifices suspense and climax to the purity of her design. Thus instead of ending with the agony of Christ, she begins with a description of the day "arteried with fire," the sun "raging on Jerusalem," "a yelping wind with the sand it lifted like a yellow mane," and the "spindling body, like a vine stretched twixt earth and sky." Since the thoughts of the Crucified form the pinnacle of the poem and since even the greatest of poets cannot hang on that height, Miss Ridge, stretched twixt earth and heaven, sinks—at this point at least—into literature. The thing is too grandiose. The shifting crowd, the changing colors of the scene, the by-play of character and the interplay of contributing detail are astonishingly summoned, but remain static. The passion becomes a panorama, seen with the exact, unflinching eye of the poet. We lose sight of the central figure in a bright cloud of metaphors and phrases that rise not from the slowly yielding core but from the prodded literary mind. We admire such effects as:

> Gnats stung him and a yellow butterfly,
> Frail as though compounded of air and light,
> Fanned him with the wafers of her wings. . . .

We recognize the finality of an hour "stagnate like a knot in time," but when so fine a simile is preceded by

> And when day sank, at menopause,
> In blue obesity, to lean
> Low upon the curving spine
> Of the horizon—

we begin to forget the tragic proportions, waiting to see to what tight detail the artist will draw our attention. The method for the first hundred pages or so is cumulatively pictorial. But where the piling on of similes was appropriate in registering the clutter of "The Ghetto," the sections entitled "He," "John," and "Judas" are blurred by the very richness of inappropriate invention. Thus John speeding away through the woods in the day's "frantic agonhead," is somehow made to see

> frail things
> That hold their tiny revels on a thorn
> Or on the green spire of a reed and pass
> In some bright avalanche of dew that slides
> In thunder from a flower of grass

—a charming fantasy, but as incongruous at that particular moment as a miniature still-life in the midst of a roaring scene by Bruegel.

When Miss Ridge leaves the supernal for the human her poem, paradoxically enough, sounds its major music. The separate stars of speech join to make a great galaxy, not mere arbitrary constellations; clarity of the original purpose shines out of confusion of color; perplexing sparkle and a puzzle of shadow resolve into steady light. Light is the nucleus of this work, being to "Firehead" what water is to Eliot's "The Waste Land"; it is not only the symbol of godhead but the recurrent source, the ever-varied music "that is time made audible." Employing light as a continuous *leitmotif* (the pun is unintentional) Miss Ridge intensifies the relations between the two Marys, deepens the dialogue of Sargon and Myrenne, projects the vision of Thaddeus still in his mother's womb, and lifts the untheatrical finale to a gathering coda.

Technically "Firehead" is a surprising *tour-de-force*. Here Miss Ridge who had identified herself with cadenced verse, uses every metrical device. Rhyme and assonance are employed lavishly; lyrics and lullabies alternate with lines of epic beat; the change of tone and pace are as dexterously managed as in "John Brown's Body." Lines take fixed possession of the memory. "The stretched sinews between mountains, bowelled with iron." "Strange figures night daddled in her soft dark hands." "Light grew in him like a stalk." "Stalwart cedars had battled many winds and bore unhewn crosses under great armpits." "The endless banalities of water." Passages move in and out of the larger design, passages as indelible as

> Light
> Came light a broadsword in through the slit
> Of the squat window, lay flat-up on the bed,
> Suave and shimmering and of a smooth edge
> A child might play with. Slowly Jerusalem
> Reared her multiple head, rauched behind façades,
> Serried with little cries, turned upon her stone
> Hams, sweated and stank; feet shuffled to and fro,
> Voices hummed and honed, uttering no thing
> Of import in any tongue. The room was a floating
> Bubble of silence amid the arc of sound
> Enclosing its fragile walls as the sea
> Enfolds a shell, it holding like the shell
> Infinite murmur. On the bed the two
> Lay, like emptied vessels, on their sides,
> Drained of all save dreams. Only the two breaths,
> Interlacing, imperceptibly wove
> Patterns in the stale air and dispersed
> Gently, without friction.

But the integral qualities of "Firehead"—its chastity of power, its profound but never pompous seriousness—are not dependent on isolated passages. Nor can they be captured in a review. They demand quiet and amplitude of spirit. So remarkable a work is sure to find the mood—and the audience—it deserves.

Gerhardt Hauptmann's long awaited autobiographical romance, just published in two volumes, bears the title of "The Book of Passion." The London *Observer*, in commenting upon it, says: "It is as intriguing to the German public as was ever Goethe's 'Poetry and Truth.' Hermann Sudermann, who died last year, wrote long autobiographical passages and added to them entire portions of his friends' lives in his last two books, each of which was an independent novel and entirely irrelevant to readers who had not the key to his life. But Hauptmann, in his preface, professes to be telling the story of somebody else, and for that reason only the initiated will ever guess where the truth lies—in the action itself or in the mental vision conjured up by the poet afterwards. More than once the parallel with the Goethe of 'Wilhelm Meister,' as well as of 'Poetry and Truth,' recurs. There are passages of criticism and interpolated sketches in these two volumes which mark them as the work of a mature man, looking backwards and taking old diaries and manuscripts from his drawer as he does so."

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Shock and Countershock

THE TRAGIC ERA: The Revolution After Lincoln. By CLAUDE G. BOWERS. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1929. $5.

Reviewed by N. W. STEPHENSON

THERE is a line in Browning, "We know in art how fashions end." The same is true of history. We are forever shifting our gaze, looking now at this phase, now at that; and we are so self-centered that each time we convince ourselves that what happens to appeal to us in the past is the whole story. In American history issues that were harped upon forty years ago, today are scarcely mentioned. The whole subject is being reoriented.

Mr. Bowers is one of the writers who aim at reorientation. He conceives it rather narrowly. One might question whether it goes further in his mind than the correction of political judgments. At least, that is what he is after in this book. Andrew Johnson was once, in the official histories of the day, a wicked, drunken creature, perhaps a traitor to his country, certainly a disgrace. Without any invidiousness one may add that that was the old fashioned Republican point of view. Mr. Bowers—again without any invidiousness—is a Democrat. As an historian he has fought manfully for the honor of the great heroes of his party, Jefferson and Jackson. Now he undertakes to clear a Republican who was regarded by other Republicans as a renegade.

In this fact is the secret of the book. The one quarrel we may have with Mr. Bowers is that he is not quite open on this point. The episode of Reconstruction should be conceived as a party battle, as the carrying over of the issues of the Civil War into social history. Most people today are willing to admit this so far as it affects the terrible—and often brilliant—men who fought so hard to appropriate for their revived "Republican" party the full prestige of Lincoln's composite "Union" party that had taken up the work of the original Republicans of 1856. That these men were holding the South down in order to build up their own power, that they were playing on after-war psychology North and West for the same purpose, has become a truism among up-to-date Americanists. Mr. Bowers agrees; and so far he is of the new day. But here his party bias steps in. He cannot bring himself to look upon the Democrats as being just the same sort of very human, very provincial politicians, that the Republicans were. The Republicans were bad men grinding the face of a fallen foe; the Democrats were true patriots trying to save the country from shame. Thus he lapses back into the rôle of historian-holding-a-brief. He is council for the defense for Andrew Johnson.

* * *

Let us give Mr. Bowers free rein in bringing to judgment with as little mercy as he pleases the cruel policies of those Republicans who "reconstructed" the nation. But let us demand an equally objective view of Johnson. There are questions that Mr. Bowers does not meet. Why should we regard Johnson, under the best light, as more than a well-intentioned, honest man who tried to continue Lincoln's policy? Where is the basis for attributing to him any definite originality as a statesman? Is it certain that all the bad impressions he made were due to the misrepresentations of enemies? Was he not playing a political game quite as thoroughly as were those enemies? That is, was he not aiming to reorganize the old Democratic party with a portion of the South as its base and himself as its head? Most important of all, was he not aiming at the elevation of his own class in the South, and thus as far from sympathy with the fallen aristocracy as were the Northern radicals? The reconsideration of the subject has not gone far enough for these questions, as yet, to be answered with finality. But it cannot be denied that Mr. Bowers evades coming to close grips with them. For him Johnson is always the high-minded patriot, animated by lofty motives; his character is above, criticism; his statesmanship distinguished.

Waiving the finality of its judgment or lack of finality, the method of the book makes it very good reading. Mr. Bowers looks on political-social history as a panorama. He sets out to pass its whole procession across the vision of the reader in such fashion that he shall have pretty much the spectacle before him that the actors in it had. In these pages we are never allowed to forget that history is not an orderly conflict of impersonal forces, but a most disorderly shock and countershock of very personal influences; and at times it is next door to impossible to rank the forces in the degrees of their importance. Mrs. Sprague's drawing room, and all the ladies who crowded the gallery of the Senate at moments of crises, are as much a part of the picture as cabinet meetings and the Ku Klux Klan. Because of the vividness of his panorama Mr. Bowers can afford to be very tolerant of the mere historian, and his concern about final judgments; he may reflect that his astute publishers put so much faith in the book that they made the initial printing a hundred thousand.

Christian Theology Today

THE TWILIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY. By H. E. BARNES. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1929. $3.

Reviewed by HAROLD J. LASKI

THE thesis of Professor Barnes's latest book is the important one that in the light of modern science it is no longer possible either to accept the Christian theology as a dogmatic system of belief, or the Christian ethic as a satisfactory guide to life. Upon the assumption that both as creed and ethic its hold over men's minds is dwindling, he calls for a complete revision of the place of the churches in modern society.

Professor Barnes's method is, briefly, to examine the claims of Christian theology and ethics in the light of the best modern knowledge. He dwells succinctly on every branch of its development, examining its central positions, and subjecting them always to a merciless critical inquiry. He rejects fundamentalism, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, out of hand. He shows a certain tepid sympathy with the views of quasi-modernists like Harry Emerson Fosdick, and quasi-rationalists like John Haynes Holmes. He concludes in favor of the rejection of any form of religious orthodoxy and argues that its disappearance will be the victory of truth and progress over error and reaction.

I should not myself state all that Professor Barnes has stated in quite the same way; I should not, either, have his certitude that the victory of unbelief has already been won. With, however, differences of detail and emphasis, I can only say that I believe that he has made out his case, and that the broad lines of his argument are irrefutable. I believe, that is to say, that there is not a single fundamental principle of Christian theology now capable of demonstration by the accepted canons of scientific evidence; I believe, also, that the historical claims to authority over men made by churches like the Church of Rome, are based on error or falsity or misunderstanding; that this holds, also, of religious bodies which, like Jews or Unitarians, stand apart from the main Christian streams of thought; that, finally, the ethic of Christianity, once its claim to be built upon Divine Revelation is rejected, has no more claim than any other to consideration, and must justify itself by its power to secure rational satisfaction of human wants.

Regarded, therefore, from my own angle, that of an agnostic who has arrived at his position from experience as a historian and publicist, I recommend Professor Barnes's book strongly to the average reader as a valuable statement of the results of modern inquiry. It has not the wisdom or the sweep of Mr. Lippmann's brilliant "Preface to Morals"; it has some faults of taste and temper, above all in the unnecessary delight it takes in the castigation of those to whom it is opposed; and it assumes, I think, far more certainty than is the case in its account of the results of scientific discovery. But any plain man who, with an open mind, desires an examination of the religious issue by one who is fully aware of the general problems involved, could not do better than begin with this volume.

Perhaps there is no better illustration of the incompatibility between the churches and modern life than questions of sex; and certainly, in that realm, the issue of birth-control is the supreme illustration. The churches view marriage as a sacrament; and this, in the extreme instance of the Roman Church, leads to a denial of the validity of divorce or the use of contraceptive methods. Professor Barnes's examination of this problem is salutary and convincing. He has no difficulty in showing that the churches' view of marriage goes by the board if we reject the view that they cannot claim Divine revelation for their principles. The question then becomes one of social expediency; and our theory must be determined by the scheme of values upon a rational examination of the evidence. So analyzed, the conclusion is irresistible that views of sex and marriage built, say, on the evidence collected by Havelock Ellis and Westermarck are infinitely more healthy, and infinitely more wise, than views built upon the principles laid down by St. Paul, and such later developments as these have received. Indeed, it is obvious that if, in modern civilization, the state took seriously the Christian view of marriage in its extreme form, it would need the police and the armed forces of the government to apply it. I find myself literally unable to understand how anyone can regard marriage between, let us say, an innocent girl and a sufferer from incipient *dementia præcox* as a union which a supposedly compassionate God desires to be indissoluble; nor can I reconcile the view of Deity as good with the notion that he desires a woman to bear children regardless of whether her health makes it desirable or whether there is the income for their proper maintenance; and that the only alternative if she is not to bear them is a chastity which, on the evidence, is probably undesirable and, in any case, incapable of enforcement in the peculiar circumstances of the marital relation. That is the issue which Professor Barnes presents to his reader, and I confess myself unable to understand how his conclusion can be avoided.

On the other hand, I think definitely that Professor Barnes underestimates the power of religious organizations. My impression is that while that power no longer grows, it is still not diminishing at any great rate. With him, I regret its survival. But I think he fails to realize that in an industrial civilization where the majority of citizens are still imperfectly educated, religious emotion supplies a response to human impulse which cannot easily be satisfied in any other way. That is, I believe, more true of America than England, because in America the workingman cannot find, on anything like the same proportionate scale, the satisfaction he can find in England from membership in his trade-union or political party. It is interesting to note that, in the mining communities of South Wales and the North of England, trade unionism is so strong that no minister of any religious denomination can hope for social authority if he is seriously hostile to the Labor Party. It is round the trade-union, the co-operative society, and the Labor Party, that all social life now accretes itself in industrial areas; the churches take a very secondary place. In America, of course, this is largely untrue; and in the small towns especially the Church is still the pivot of social activity. The contact, moreover, between business leaders and the churches intensifies the importance of that contest in America. I agree with Professor Barnes that disintegration of ecclesiastical influence is certain; but the process seems to me likely to be much longer and much more painful than he is prepared to admit.

"The number of people who knew Dickens—now very small—has been reduced by the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Eastdown at Higham, near Rochester, at the age of eighty-two," says *John o'London's Weekly*. "She was one of the two living people who were in the novelist's service at Gads Hill Place. The other, his page-boy, lives in London. Mrs. Eastdown used to tell how Dickens once gave her a fright when she was alone in his London house. She came downstairs to find a strange man standing in the hall. He was dressed in rags, had a red handkerchief tied round his neck, and a battered hat hid half his face. Thinking he was a thief, Mrs. Eastdown screamed for help, and was then amazed to hear Dickens's voice come from the lips of the stranger. He had been visiting some soup kitchens in disguise, he told her, to discover what the soup was like! Mrs. Eastdown was with him at his death in 1870, and had enjoyed a small pension from his estate."

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Parallel Revelations

THE MAURIZIUS CASE. By JACOB WASSERMANN. New York: Horace Liveright. 1929. $3.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

FOR the great army of readers, whatever the critics may decide among themselves, the function of the novel is to tell us a story; and, no matter for what qualities the illuminated may praise him, it remains the chief claim of Jacob Wassermann upon the attention of his public that he is probably the greatest living narrative artist. Not the most prolific, perhaps, nor the most consistent, but, at his best, the most completely absorbing. No other writer whose work is now being offered to the English reading public has the power so completely to envelop the mind of his readers in the net of his tale, so authoritatively to command a suspension of disbelief which becomes less merely "willing" than absolutely involuntary. The world of Jacob Wassermann may not be, one sometimes suspects that for all its cunning documentation it certainly is not, quite the real world, but it has a sustained reality of the imagination which asserts an equal validity and represents a higher artistic achievement. When Wassermann is at his best, the minds of his readers are his, to do with as he pleases. And there are many pages of that best in his latest book to be translated, "The Maurizius Case." Gratefully, one surrenders to their spell.

From the first, in this new book, the reader of Wassermann—and who, these days, is not one of his readers?—is on familiar ground. The idealism of youth, the sorrowful wisdom, the even sadder ignorance, of age; the conflict between the generations, sharpened in the turmoil of post-war Germany to dramatic tenseness; a generous determination that truth and justice shall prevail, at whatever cost, struggling in vain against the impossibility of blotting out the past: these are the themes. Etzel von Andergast, seventeen years old, becomes convinced that his correct and unapproachable father who uses "justice" as the iron rod of his authority, has built the foundations of his great career as a prosecuting attorney upon an unjust conviction. Alone, and with no weapons but enthusiasm and native shrewdness, Etzel sets out to find the one man who knows the truth of the affair and wring from him the confession which, he supposes, is all that is necessary to right the wrong that has been done. Meanwhile Herr von Andergast is led by his son's departure to reopen, privately, his old investigation. As father and son, working independently and by very different means, draw from the minds of the convict and his betrayer the long hidden truth, the story of Maurizius, his wife, his false friend, and his fatal mistress, is unfolded in a sequence of parallel revelations. It is the method of "The Ring and the Book," simplified and knit together by a finely maintained suspense. The story of Maurizius is, except for its element of mystery, commonplace enough, sordid and pitiful rather than tragic. But the manner in which it is elicited, the analysis of the light of truth as it is refracted in half a dozen different personalities; the subtle interweaving of motive and counter-motive until what has been obscure at last becomes clear,—this is altogether admirable! This provides pages which Wassermann has nowhere surpassed.

It would be pleasant to end on a note of unqualified approval. But Herr Wassermann's novels, in spite of the narrative power which he is able to display, are never without flaws. And these flaws seem not unconnected with the quality his critics have often most admired, his "profound ethical insight," his "serious criticism of life." One can afford to be patient with the crochets of one's favorite story tellers. When the adventures of Becky Sharp are interrupted by an essay on pecuniary culture one skips or reads on according to one's tastes and is none the worse. But Herr Wassermann, in common with his generation, affects a complete objectivity; the criticism, therefore, must be implicit in the text. And the criticism of life and of society, as seems inevitable among modern writers when such criticism goes beyond a smile or a sigh, begins to warp the plot. The sad fate of Maurizius, when that rather dull and shallow person finally escapes his prison, may be necessary to our comprehension of the injustice that society has done him, but it is immaterial to the story, and except for the fine glimpse of Anna Jahn, the fatal mistress, grown old and respectable, it is a mere drag upon our interest. The final, rather hysterically written scene between Etzel and his father may contain much of what Herr Wassermann has to say of youthful idealism and man's inhumanity to man, but it is a bungling conclusion to their silent struggle, and decreases our opinion of Etzel without any dramatic gain.

One ventures such strictures with hesitation. A certain "tendermindedness," an oversensitivity to cruelty and injustice, to ugliness and pain is the penalty the artist often pays for the thin skin he must wear. And to express one's revulsion and disgust in concrete realizations, even at the cost of the plot, is to err, at least, on the side of nobility. Herr Wassermann is too much the artist to err far. And in the end, whatever may become of the moral, the story, in this as in his other books, continues to command our complete admiration.

Pictures of the Past

SHORT AS ANY DREAM. By ELIZABETH SHEPLEY SERGEANT. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARGARET PRESCOTT MONTAGUE

IN her originality of handling the historical novel, Miss Sergeant has produced a distinguished book, remarkable for its freshness and beauty. One hardly knows just how to classify it—novel, epic, biography, cluster of episodes strung on a thread of family history—? It might be any of these, and yet it is something more as well, and that *more*, whatever one may call it, is what gives the book its real significance, its arresting beauty of appeal. Miss Sergeant has drawn these living pictures from the past of a New England family, and set them before the reader with such vitality and power, that one cannot but think the publishers have missed to some extent the real core of her production by announcing it as "a history of American gentle folk," "an epic novel of New England," for its value is not in its subject matter, but lies rather in the originality with which that material has been presented. It is this which catches the interest, and which in seeking to describe the book makes one conceive of it in metaphor. One figure after another rises in the imagination. In its swift and delicate breathlessness it is like a stone flung skipping across a pond. The stone is the progress of the narrative; every time it touches the water there is the ripple of an incident, a chapter in the lives of human beings. The pond across which the author has flung her skipping stone with such admirable skill, is the background of the family. In this case the family is the New England one of Penton, but Miss Sergeant has made them stand for more than themselves, for the whole of human intercourse.

Again one thinks of the story in terms of a kaleidoscope through which one peers for a moment at some bright pattern of color, then with a quick turn of the hand obliterates that combination to bring to birth some other. In the same way the author sets for us one bright pattern of life after another drawn from the past history of this Penton family: pictures of New England, of Minnesota, of California: then with a quick turn of her art these are disolved in pictures of the present time. Her present, however, is always one through which the past shows, like some diaphanous garment beneath which one glimpses the color of a brighter fabric.

The book is suggestive also of a motion picture in its disjointed, swiftly moving scenes, being strongly reminiscent in this respect of "John Brown's Body," although, of course, not done in poetry as was Mr. Benét's epic.

A skipping stone, a kaleidoscope, a motion picture, one may think of them all in perusing this book only in the end to realize that the author herself has given us in the title the absolutely right descriptive figure of her book—a dream. "Short as Any Dream,"—that is what in truth it is, and one may well pause a moment to compliment Miss Sergeant on the felicity of the name she has chosen. It is exactly what a title should be—and so rarely is—the seed out of which the whole book is seen to flower.

Yes, a dream. The author has cleverly succeeded in giving the impression that the book has been dreamed rather than written. The last scene in the present before the narrative plunges back into the past, is of "Hope" in her New York apartment surrounded by the Penton furniture, pulling out the bundle of old letters. Then with the turning of the next page, Hope has vanished—or perhaps more truly, gone to sleep to dream about her ancestors—New York is gone, and gone the year of nineteen twenty-eight, and here is Nancy Penton in the New England of a century ago.

It is no doubt this dream-like quality which she has sought to convey which has so frequently kept the author from finishing her episodes. Time and again a situation is developed, characters elaborated, and then Puff! out the whole scene goes like the brief candle. So it is in a dream. So it is also no doubt in real life; nevertheless with all due respect to the author's skill, this method all too often disappoints the reader and makes the book at times exasperating to peruse. One must have an alert mind, and a good memory for genealogy, to keep track of the story as it skips disjointedly from one period to another. In view of this difficulty one is inclined to quarrel a little with the author and proofreaders who have permitted the slip of speaking of the Cunningham baby as "Jackie" in one place, and "Dick" in another. These Pentons and Cunninghams are hard enough to follow without the author herself forgetting their names!

Disjointed and exasperating as the book undoubtedly is at times, and somewhat dull and prosaic as it occasionally shows itself when the author's sureness of touch momentarily fails her, nevertheless it is on the whole a masterly piece of work, and one which no reader interested in the trend of American fiction can afford to miss. We are grateful to Miss Sergeant for the originality of her attempt, and hopeful of what her future may have in store.

Tragic Frustration

THE SOUND AND THE FURY. By WILLIAM FAULKNER. New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THIS is an original and impressive book. In manner it is a new departure in the stream-of-consciousness school. It is in four parts, the first a day as it passes through the mind of an idiot, a man of thirty-three with the intelligence of a three-year-old child; at any casual reminder, a place or a name, he is carried back to something similar that happened long before, giving hints of uncomprehended events that stir the imagination like a half-remembered nightmare. The second part, eighteen years earlier, reaches one through the mind of his brother, a boy whose mind has been strained to the breaking-point by what has happened, and who has resolved to drown himself; his thoughts give the tragic occurences more clearly. The third part, in 1928 again, is in the mind of a third brother, and shows what the life of the family is like, now that the catastrophe is past, and they are living on with the effects as best they can. The fourth part, the next day, is told in the third person. It will be seen that there is a plainer architecture than in most books of this kind, a steady progression from fantasy to fact, and a steady movement toward externality and away from emotion.

That is to say, the tragedy constantly deepens; for the book is a tragedy of the kind that has appeared in literature almost within the memory of man, that of frustration, futility, imprisoned monotony, of

> Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow,
> There's this little street and this little house.

The story is concerned with the decay of a great Southern family, *racé* and fine to the point of fatal weakness. Only the last of the men of the family, Jason, the *I* of Part III (and he, though coarse enough for anything) is embittered by his helpless and pitiless struggle against the wellbred weakness of the others; he systematically robs his niece and cheats his mother, and succeeds only in over-reaching himself. These people's tragedy is not in the seduction, the suicide, or their other great calamities, but in the existence that is finally left them, on a shrunken plantation, with half a dozen shiftless negroes, in a round of deadly monotony centered in the idiot son, Benjy.

Benjy is one of those idiots of whom some psychologist has guessed that they would regard pain, if they could feel it, as a welcome surprise. Once during the day he watches his finger stray to the fire and sees it start away, without any idea that he has hurt himself. That is symbolic of the mortal stupor by which, in one way or another, every character is prevented from really suffering from events. Quentin, the suicide, comes nearest it, and is happiest,

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but when we see it he has already resolved upon drowning himself, and is upon the very verge of sanity; he breaks his watch to put himself outside time, and has almost put himself outside ordinary emotions as well; he is fey. Jason is a normal brute enough, but deadened by a harsh cynicism that speaks of Benjy as the Great American Gelding and jokes about Quentin's death. The others have their drugs: mother religion, father witty, useless philosophy, Uncle Maury drink. If only one of them could feel sharp pain at anything, there would be hope or at least exaltation; but there is only a dull resentment of the life narrowing and hardening around them. The last incident is trivial but terrifying: Benjy is taken for his usual drive, but because they pass the monument on the right instead of the left, he bellows in wordless rage till they go back and take the unalterable way.

In his writing Mr. Faulkner shows a remarkable knack of opening a vista of horror with a single sentence, as when Quentin thinks of Benjy "rolling his head in the cradle till he rolled the back flat—they said the reason Uncle Maury never did any work was that he used to roll his head." His power is shown almost as much by what he does without as what he uses. There is deliciousness in the figure of Gerald, the self-conscious aristocrat, the complete Man Who Does the Right Thing; there is an exquisite tenderness in Quentin's thoughts, at Harvard, of the negroes at home; but for the most part Mr. Faulkner rigorously denies himself humor and tenderness; here they would be in his way. This is a man to watch.

Man Thinking

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. A Study in *Litteræ Inhumaniores*. By NORMAN FOERSTER. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1929. $1.

Reviewed by HARRY HAYDEN CLARK
University of Wisconsin

"THE American Scholar" by Norman Foerster will mark the dawn of a new and more fruitful epoch in the study and teaching of literature. No one interested in literature and the destiny of America can afford not to give this slender blue book his deepest consideration. The man who has revolutionized the study of American letters has here turned to an appraisal of the methods of literary scholars, in general, an appraisal distinguished by his usual discrimination, justice, and wisdom.

The first five chapters lay a mine of gunpowder under literary study which is merely descriptive, mechanical, and aimlessly acquisitive. Professor Foerster argues that the scientific spirit, devoted to description rather than evaluation, has seduced the literary scholar to a progressively dangerous preoccupation with (1) language, (2) literary history, (3) general history, and (4) psychological history, at the expense of what should be his ultimate object: "the critical determination of the worth of literature to man, its human benefit and use." He concludes:

> In our exaggerated emphasis on mechanical technique, in our failure to perceive that thoroughness demands far more than this technique, in our blindness to the need of discipline in taste, imaginative insight, and critical acuteness and breadth, in the rareness of such qualities as reflection, poise, proportion, and sanity, in the sterility of general ideas that renders much of our instruction external and phenomenal, in the absorption in time and relativity that causes us to confuse literature and literary history, and literary history with history, in the undertone of futility which often betrays a romantic purposelessness in place of a clear-minded dedication to the humanities, in the recurrent note of cant in our enthusiasm for contributions to the sum of knowledge, above all, perhaps, in the cheap worship of success and pursuit of the novel and sensational, American scholarship is only too clearly reflecting the contemporary paradox of strenuous production in the outer world of action accompanied with disintegration in the inner world of thought.

In the last four chapters, which are constructive, the author elaborates the argument that the highest end of literary scholarship, the evaluation of the human significance of literature, can be best attained not by the study of history, of change, but by the study of what is changeless, by a criticism whose criteria are based inductively upon certain "constants," upon the changeless "law of taste," upon the "unity of memory running through the ages," upon the qualities which all great works of art have in common. "Literature can be understood only when studied with the instruments it itself employs, which are philosophical—ethical and esthetic in vital fusion—vastly more than they are scientfic." The methods of such a comprehensive criticism Professor Foerster has outlined in detail in his masterly "Conclusion" to "American Criticism," which won the high distinction of being placed on the League of Nations list of 1928.

Many of the contemporary evils in scholarship are charged to an imitation of German methods, "already old-fashioned and even anachronistic." The author advocates "abandoning the German doctorate and emulating the French," for "surely France is closer than any other nation to the ideal of a well-rounded scholarship: a scholarship at once scientific and critical, close to the facts but dominating them through general ideas, taste, and critical insight, contributing to knowledge in the best sense, and developing rather than warping the scholar himself." Indeed, the best testimony of Professor Foerster's right to speak as the champion of such a scholarship is the deep respect shown in France, as illustrated by the resounding review accorded "American Criticism" (in the *Revue Anglo-Américaine, February*, 1929) by the distinguished Professor Cestre of the Sorbonne. In the April issue of the same journal Professor Cestre concludes, "M. Foerster combat le bon combat, et l'on ne pourrait souhaiter meilleur champion à une grande et aussi juste cause."

Since opponents of "The American Scholar" will probably tend to evade the central argument and shift their emphasis to the confessedly debatable details regarding the requirements for higher academic degrees in the last chapter, it may be well to stress the fact that the suggestions of that chapter in no way lessen the validity of the central argument already outlined. It is encouraging to note that Professor Foerster draws support from a dozen of the profoundest scholars and critics: from a president and secretary of the Modern Language Association of America (Professors Ashley Thorndike and Carleton Brown), from such men as Professors Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More, Stuart Sherman, Feuillerat, Cazamian, Angellier, Legouis, Stoll, Dean Heller, and the late W. C. Brownell. He might also have cited Dr. Canby's advocacy of the necessity of supplementing scientific with esthetic criticism in *The Saturday Review* for March 2, 1929. A crusader in the vanguard of the most authoritative and soundest scholarly opinion, Professor Foerster has set a model for the literature of controversy in his dignity, his serenity of mood, his poise, his fairness, and his conduct of a perfectly scaled technical argument without losing sight of its universal implications.

* * *

"The American Scholar" makes its author the standard-bearer of all who devoutly believe that the higher esthetic and ethical destinies of America lie in the hands of our educators. Professor Foerster's plea that the sort of scholarship advocated would attract creative writers, students of genuine literary ability now "repelled by a training that emphasizes everything but literature," is of the highest significance, for ultimately, I believe, our universities must be responsible for the creation of a sound and unified social imagination, based on the unity of memory linking the ages, without which it is futile to hope for a great American literature. For great art has always been organic with and supported by the life and vision of a whole people. An imaginative ideal must have dwelt in the minds of a whole age before a writer can body it forth with the concentration, the brooding intensity, and the unerring congruency to human nature demanded of great art. And this unity of imagination can be developed most effectively by directing the best of the younger minds in our universities to a study of taste of the ages, of "the universal and unchanging in man, 'the underlying and permanent significance of humanity.'" Not until we bridge the existing chasm between the literary scholar and the creative writer can we view with optimism the future of American letters.

No less portentous is Professor Foerster's book to the cause of American ethical life. In a chaotic present the most reasonable and fundamental guide is the life of the past studied with discrimination as to its promotion of happiness or of despair. European romanticism, with its faith in natural goodness, primitivism, absolute liberty, *laissez-faire*, and nature and material things, was galvanized into a life new and hysterical by its transplantation to the vast material resources of a frontier America. Our countrymen have been living mainly in terms of this outworn European romanticism, the value of which was discredited by its own advocates over a century ago; Wordsworth confessed he had "too blindly reposed" his trust in this "fond illusion," and Coleridge discovered in dejection that man "may not hope from outward forms to win . . . the life whose fountains are within." But the Pied Piper, the matchless lure and abundance of "outward forms," of material and natural resources, drowned the warning voices of Europe, enamored America of change, and has seduced even the scholar. In our national distintegration our salvation may well lie in the true scholar, loyal to his trust, who shall be, as Emerson said, Man Thinking, the delegated mind of society, whose high function shall be the purposeful and discriminating interpretation of the discoveries man has made, in terms of beauty, regarding "the conduct of life" and the path to happiness. We must seek aid in more venerable traditions, carefully winnowed, which have won the unchanging respect of the ages for their ministry to the deepest and most universal need of man, for their ministry to happiness.

The Liberator

BOLIVAR, the Passionate Warrior. By T. R. YBARRA. New York: Ives Washburn. 1929.

Reviewed by C. H. HARING
Harvard University

WE are offered within the year a second popular biography of Simón Bolívar. If this "Washington of South American independence" still remains a man of mystery to the North American reader, it is through no lack of attention on the part of our indefatigable bookmakers.

Mr. Ybarra's volume, however, is a welcome improvement upon that of his immediate predecessor, Michel Vaucaire. Ybarra is a native of Caracas in Venezuela, whence came Bolívar himself. His great-grandfather, affectionately referred to in the dedication, was a friend of the Liberator and a faithful companion-in-arms; and he himself grew up in an atmosphere of adulation of the national hero, which permeated not only his own home but the whole city, and is the very breath of life to the patriotic Caraqueño today. The book, however, although written by a Venezuelan, does not come to us through translation. The author has lived many years in the United States, was long on the staff of the New York *Times*, and writes with a sprightliness and verve that betray his journalistic training.

What Michel Vaucaire saw as through a glass darkly, Ybarra perceives with the sure instinct of a native, supported by a wealth of intelligent reading of the available sources. The narrative is chronologically and geographically accurate—no small asset in current popular biography—and as a reflection of the many-faceted personality of Bolívar it is eminently successful.

Although the author's aim, as he states in the Foreword, "has been to present [the Liberator] as he was, without unduly enhancing virtues or condoning faults," he is obviously filled with a consuming enthusiasm for his subject. In his style, too, there is often a redundancy of rhetoric that proclaims the Latin temperament. But this is perhaps as it should be, for it echoes the flowery exuberance of Bolívar himself, and mirrors the picturesqueness of his remarkable career. As a mere repository of bald fact, the book is not the ultimate word about Bolívar's life, and its picture of the Spanish colonial régime which he helped to overthrow is today a bit old-fashioned. But as the verisimilitude of one of the greatest statesmen and military leaders that America has produced, it is to be heartily recommended.

In his own day Bolívar, for his services to the cause of independence in the New World, was held in high esteem in the United States. The family of George Washington sent to him in 1825, through Lafayette as an intermediary, a locket containing a portrait of Washington and a wisp of his hair, a gift which the Liberator cherished to the end of his life. In 1930 the Spanish-American nations propose to join in commemorating the centenary of Bolívar's death. This book comes, therefore, as an appropriate reminder to North Americans of his extraordinary personality and achievement.

The famous house in Gough-square, London, which Dr. Johnson occupied for over ten years, and in which he compiled the greater part of his dictionary, is to be preserved for Great Britain. It was purchased many years ago by Mr. Cecil Bisshopp Harmsworth, and he has now formed a body of Governors to hold the property in trust for the **nation.**

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The Bowling Green

A Little Back Room

IN a small and most unfashionable hotel, which in this age of grotesque discretions I suppose I must not identify, there is a little back room in the basement. Its most devoted habitués reach it by a secret rear access through a neighboring garage, not only because by such entry they evade the coat-check damsel in the lobby upstairs; but also because the more obvious road into this retreat is through a doorway misleadingly superscribed LADIE'S, which startles the delicate-minded. It is true there is still another approach, by a secret winding stair, but this very few know.

The little back room, however reached, has grown much endeared to a certain coterie of beachcombers who occasionally sit there either for secret counsel or for loquacious relaxation. There the waiters of the hotel sit for their own hasty meals, snatched at off-hours; resorting thither about the aperitive hour you are likely to find Fritz or Hans hastily leaping up and bearing off with him his hard-earned plate of chowder. And to all conferences held in that modest chamber Mike the barkeep is a party. In time past the hotel had a regular barroom on the street level; but this later era has reduced it to a mere cupboard in the basement. The bar itself is only a shelf across the doorway, but Mike still has the cunningest hand at an Old fashioned cocktail that has yet been encountered. It is he, spurred on by his admiring clients in the Little Back Room, who invented the Deep Dish Old-Fashioned, which, without any larger quantity of alcoholic spirit, exceeds in bulk and flavor any cocktail ever known. And Mike, roosting on his elbows on his tiny bar and brooding like some tutelary presence over his customers in the little room opposite, is a psychic reality to be reckoned with.

* * *

The Little Back Room, you are remarking with some reproach, is only a kind of speakeasy. Well there is even a possible suggestion in the word. In that small basement, which large plumbing pipes and valves give so nautical an air (rather like an engineers' mess in the belly of a liner) speech is easy. There have been moments when anxieties and pressures seemed to drop away; when Mike's golden calorific brought excellent meanings to utterance; when a plain tumbler was not just a glass but a chalice. The mettlesome whang of the little dance orchestra in the slippery grillroom near-by faded to a murmurous diapason; time faltered in its reeling orbit. I can think of occasions when those usually reticent became angels of candor and shot off like Roman candles. Even in the intervals of difficult decision the goddess of comedy has been known to slip in and take the seat which is always reserved for her; men, as is their saving virtue, have punctuated perplexity with screams of mirth. So if a speakeasy is a place where truth is made easier to speak, I approve it. Mike sees plenty of publicans and sinners and asks them no questions. Monday, however, is his night off; his locum tenens does not properly understand the technique of the Deep Dish.

* * *

There is no deep-laid reason for my alluding to the Little Back Room just now, except that at Christmas time, I suppose, one instinctively thinks of all wholenesses of living. It is customary to formalize the season as one of clear cold darkness and gemmed with stars (a Black, Starr and Frost season Fifth Avenue might remark) but there have been December dusks that were very chill and gray. It is regrettable, one has noticed, that the essential Christmas feeling does not usually penetrate us until the Date itself is so near that we cannot catch up. By the time we find in ourselves the Ten-Day-Before-Christmas sentiment there are only two days left. But there must be some deliberate artistry of the great ironist in the festival of peace being preceded by such billows of pressure; by all the prickliest anxieties and humblest difficulties of the year. It is then that Capital gets cowardly, that the radiator freezes and and the coal runs low in the bin; that roads are crusted with sleet, fillings come out of teeth, and the mails swell with the thousand appeals of tragic need. At that time, when (in theory) one would relish the generous pleasures of chance, one is most bedevilled by detail. Then if ever one would like to savor to the brim the huge punchbowl of life, to mark the slow curves of loveliness and the acute zigzags of comedy. And it is exactly then that consciousness is most teased to the tingling quick by the push of the immediate affair. Suddenly you grow honest with yourself and know you would not have it otherwise. And you may chance to remind yourself that the holiday we celebrate is in honor of the greatest artist of all, in so far as we can guess at his character. It is rather incredible that we should all pay tribute to him, for we have so little of his recklessness, his noble folly, his consuming mirth. He was never afraid of absurdity. Surely to him can be applied those echoing words Conrad wrote of the artist in general—"He appeals to that part of our being which is not dependent on wisdom; to that in us which is a gift and not an acquisition. He speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives; to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain."

* * *

There was an evening in the Little Back Room when one of the group, partly in earnest and partly (I fear) in pure mischief, set the table by the ears by a lively attack upon the sentimentalisms of collectors. The folly of first editions and association copies was his sermon, and as there happened to be some indurated collectors present the skirmish was lively. And yet this rationalist, this anarch, was one whom I have seen take a salt-shaker from the table and sprinkle it on the actors and round the theatre on an opening night, convinced that it would bring fortune. I must show him, however, as evidence of the amiable extremes to which frenzy can go, the suggestion of the genial Charles Heartman, auctioneer of Metuchen, New Jersey, that customers from Philadelphia wishing to attend his book-sales can take a train as early as 5:45 A. M. Mr. Heartman's instructions for bibliophiles are so charming I cannot resist reprinting them:—

If you are a collector of First Editions and wish to receive my auction catalogues regularly, please write me, stating at the same time your particular subject.

If you wish to dispose of any rare books through auction or by outright sale, this is as good a time as any to discuss the matter.

If you cannot attend this sale personally, I shall be happy to take care of your bids, with fixed prices or at my discression. If you are coming yourself and are worried about the long session, I can relieve you. There will be an intermission and a buffet luncheon will be served.

If you are coming from New York, trains leave Pennsylvania Station in the morning at 7:05, 8:05, and 9.25. You may choose your trains according to how much time you need for looking over material. If you come from Philadelphia, you can use trains leaving 5:45 and 8.03 in the morning.

Should you come by motor bus from either direction, these busses pass my house. If you know where I am located, the driver will stop in front of the house, otherwise, ask the driver to stop at Danford's, which necessitates a short walk.

If you come by car, I am located on the Lincoln Highway and you wont have much trouble locating me.

Let's hope that we will all have a good time.

Not less pleasant was a telegram that reached me the other day from the excellent George Frisbee of San Francisco, collector and critic and student of letters. He wired:—

My singular good friend and kinsprit have indisputable evidence that Earl of Oxford did the literature credited to Shakespeare Spencer Sidney Raleigh and other shall publish soon perhaps privately this is to prepare you for the surprise so that you can tell the gang that you knew me when. GEORGE G. FRISBEE.

I told them. In the receptive atmosphere of the Back Room nothing seems impossible. We wait George's publication with impatience.

* * *

I must be forgiven for printing here a letter from British Columbia, which was never intended for print—but letters from Frederick Niven, one of the most genuinely gifted novelists of our time, make themselves exceptions to many rules of discretion. I only hope that he'll take it easy until he gets that too generous heart of his back under control:—

Nelson, B. C., November 1929.

A long talk I fancy this may be. I have the time for it! I am laid up. I seem to have overdone it on my last High Country expeditions and have enlarged my heart. It feels enlarged in more senses than one. I lie here with a very full heart indeed, thinking, thinking—and remembering, remembering. Sometimes I feel it might burst. Extreme athlete's heart the doctor calls it. You know I am crazy about the High Country—away up above timber. . . . P. has just come and given me a dirty look. The doctor won't let me work yet—I mean writing work. She saw me penning this and gave that look. At once I countered: "I'm only writing a letter."

A lovely lovely day. The stern-wheeler went away out of sight just now out in the lake, white under its leisurely cloud of white steam, laying its wedge of wake behind it. I lie here and look at doings like that and in memory go back to all manner of places, thanking God for Memory. Sometimes it feels, lying here, as if life is just one packed moment. I see a creek of the mountains here passing through jungly underbrush past devil's club and huckleberries—and then I see the Grampians from the top of Goat Fell one way, and the other, the Ayrshire curves of shingle and Ailsa Craig—and then I'm five years old lying on my back in the sand of the English Hill above Valparaiso looking at white clouds away at the end of receding tall poplars—and then I'm in Heriot Row looking at Stevenson's door on one side and at a birch tree in the Gardens on the other. And my heart seems swelling and swelling!

You mention Heriot Row in one of your essays. I don't recall that you mention Pentland Hills. I used to go out there early in the morning, so early that I could get back to Edinburgh and into the office by nine, or perhaps three minutes past nine. And I lay here today and saw dew drops hanging on railings and grass-tips, still from those mornings. Reading a preface to the World's Classics edition of Alexander Smith's *Dreamthorp* the other day I found that he knew that hill above Bonaly. By the way, all the encyclopædias and biographical articles say he was born Dec. 31, 1830. But it seems pretty certainly not so. On his grave it says he was born Dec. 31, 1829. His father and mother were alive when he died, and they should know. A registration of his birth can't be found among the records but his relatives and close friends say Dec. 31, 1829. That means we draw near the anniversary of his birth. It might slip your mind. *A Lark's Flight*—worthy to stand beside De Quincey, don't you think? and that fascinating *A Summer in Skye* we might wish to talk of James Ashcroft Noble in his essay *Stevenson's Forerunner* (publisher by Mosher) uses that word of *A Summer in Skye* I think: fascinating. I've been rereading it lying here and it gives me the very reflection of a heron flying over Loch Etive as I saw it when last I was there. Dr. Johnson saw but the vast protuberances and kept looking for books in the houses. Smith saw mountains, and not looking upon himself as a great figure on tour, could sit and listen to the people talking. When he got back to Edinburgh he could read again. He has a whole lot of pictures of people in that *Summer in Skye* so perfectly done that I got bored over an article on "Visibility" in character-drawing in a recent Life and Letters. I fear the writer of it had never read Smith. Often these very very high and narrow brows make one say, Phut! They say that never this, that, or the other has been done, and I could down books, without becoming more than semi-recu to show them just where it has been done without re their ears.

Yes, at this time there are probably some who reread, in *Dreamthorp*, the essay on Christmas. From no one could a reminder of Alexander Smith come with more grace than his fellow-Scot and fellow-artist in honorable and thoughtful living, Frederick Niven.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

A Part of Modern History

THE BLACK VENUS. By ANDRÉ SALMON. New York: The Macaulay Co. 1929. $2.50.

PRE-WAR Montmartre and its always eccentric if occasionally brilliant inhabitants furnish the material for André Salmon's kaleidoscopic post-war novel, "La Négresse du Sacré-Coeur," of which Mr. Slater Brown has endeavored to furnish an English version. It is said to be a *roman à clef*, in which painters such as Picasso and Derain are to be found under the names of Sorgue and Paroli, the writers Mac Orlan and Wedekind as O'Brien and Darneting, the unclassifiable Max Jacob as Septime Febur, and finally the author himself as Florimond Daubelle.

Regardless of this, Salmon has told in his vigorous cinematic style a spiral and deliberately indirect story of suicide, love, and murder, in which the principal figures are an artist's model, a professional gigolo, several beggars, and a planter whose plantation is situated on the Butte. This gentleman, who attempts to raise bananas and aloes in the very shadow of Abadie's immense dome, is worth further study. He has bought a negro slave to wait on him, and is given to dispensing rum with truly tropical prodigality. M. Salmon gives a good deal of his space to this character, who like all the other types is evidently authentic. The whole is highly colored, violent, a little cruel, and somewhat unpleasant to read, but now that the Butte has been deserted even by the tourists for the more ample spaces and less picturesque ways of Montparnasse, M. Salmon's book is more than a good novel; it is also in its rather disorderly way a part of modern history, and a not unimportant one.

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Books of Special Interest

America and Music

THEY STILL SING OF LOVE. By SIGMUND SPAETH. New York: Horace Liveright. 1929. $2.

Reviewed by EDWARD BALLANTINE

Harvard University

MR. SPAETH is a genial, enthusiastically musical person with a keen sense of humor who sees and reports vividly what is going on in the musical life of America today. He seems to be chiefly occupied with the study of popular taste and the problem of how to lead it on to higher things.

In the essays of the first part of the book, "*Allegro ma non troppo* (not too serious)," he gives a diverting account of the popular songs of the last century. Together with this he present precious excerpts from the words which might otherwise be forgotten or unknown to most of us, as for example this stanza from "Only me" (date not given):

One got the kisses and kindly words,
That was her pet, Marie,
One told her troubles to bees and birds,
That one was only me!

or this from "The Simple Life":

I dreamed that all our millionaires were
leading simple lives,
And in this strange dream the Newport
bunch were living with their wives.

In the second part, "*Scherzo*," (not at all serious), there are some clever skits such as "The Voice"—"The voice is not ready and never will be," and one with a serious purpose, "Local Talent."

In the third group of essays, "*Andante con moto*" (quite serious), there is a good deal of thought and common sense along with much snap judgment. Mr. Spaeth has won success in addressing Rotary clubs, somewhat to the detriment of his soundness as a critic and sober accuracy as a writer. Jazz may be very easy to enjoy for either musician or layman, but a worth while analysis of it is a delicate and difficult undertaking. Mr. Spaeth's definition is too easy, "Jazz is merely the distortion of conventional music." What does he mean by conventional music? Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Wagner, and Debussy are as different from one another as they are different from jazz. Certain freak effects consistently adopted, jazz itself is one of the most conventional forms that ever existed. There is more difference between "The Afternoon of a Faun" and the overture to "Die Meistersinger" than there is between any two fox trots. A really searching analysis of jazz may be found in Paul L. Laubenstein's article "Jazz—Debit and Credit" in the October number of the *Musical Quarterly*.

Mr. Spaeth, in the essay "How Good is Primitive Music?" dismisses all characteristics of primitive music which are not found in the works of the great classical masters as being worthless in their crudity, or as merely failures to sing in tune or time. This is unscientifically contrary to authoritative evidence. If Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms got along without the use of five and seven beat rhythms, paralled fifths, and exotic scales, why should composers who have to get along without being Bach, Beethoven, or Brahms not turn for help to these neglected resources? No one composer or school of composers can make use of all possible means of expression and keep a unified, workable style. Debussy, Stravinsky, Bartok, Malipiero, and others are proof of the reward of turning back or aside to effects which were not essential to the great classic tradition.

In the essay, "Symphonies for Business Men," Mr. Spaeth makes a statement which will increase the fatigue of the tired business man, and which is moreover not at all true. He says, "Melody is the sticky sweetness of music, the clogging jam which needs a background of nourishing bread before it becomes really palatable." Now, if you took away the melody from the "Londonderry Air," or from the medieval chant of "Dies Irae," or from Mozart's "Voi che sapete," or the unaccompanied English horn solo from Tristan, or the song of the hermit thrush, how much would be left? And to how many Rotarians would not the melody of perhaps three of these be not jam but caviar? The jam of many a jazz piece or symphonic poem is supplied not by the melody, which may amount to only a few crumbs, but by the rich chords and spicy orchestration. No gentle listener who says rather plaintively "What I love in music is melody" should be discouraged. The trouble is that he probably loves only a small repertoire of hackneyed though possibly fine melodies, while thousands of divinely beautiful melodies wait in vain for the homage of his loving ear."

Bulls and Bears

A HISTORY OF FINANCIAL SPECULATION. By R. H. MOTTRAM. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1929. $4.

Reviewed by MYRON M. STRAIN

THIS ambitious project undertakes no less a task than to narrate and examine the development of the speculative trait from the time of the Suffolk flint mines, possibly in the Paleolithic era, down to the day before the November stock exchange débâcle. It is a trait that is found to have been universal and immemorial, and to it Mr. Mottram justly assigns credit for much of the material progress of the race. Nowadays the tendency is towards the participation of unprecedented numbers of non-professional speculators in the formal procedures of the established security and commodity exchanges, and a work that would convey to these newcomers some sense of the historical setting of their activities would clearly be useful, both to them and to society. I take it that this consideration has inspired "A History of Financial Speculation."

To the preparation of his treatise Mr. Mottram has brought the combined qualifications of a novelist and a banker—for he is both. That is to say, he brings the novelist's preoccupation with character in action, and the banker's peculiarly pragmatic and commonsense temperament. And along with these goes a manner so gracious and engaging that one reads the book sympathetically and wishes that he had brought certain other qualifications as well—chiefly, a firmer grasp of the historical and economic material involved, the interest and enterprise to make significant and interesting such matters, for instance, as the tedious recurrences of the nineteenth century's mysterious "credit cycles," and a more lucid expository style.

This last, perhaps, is the most annoying deficiency. Mr. Mottram is at his best in the home land of England, in the picturesque eighteenth and immediate twentieth centuries. He tells the story of law, of the Rothschilds, of Walpole and the South Sea Company, of the financial aspects of the cataclysm of 1914 and the reconstruction measures since 1918, clearly, gracefully, interestingly, and with shrewd and enlightening interpretative comment. But when he undertakes exposition and explanation the effect is not so happy. He seems to lose interest, and, losing interest, he loses clarity. He muddles the reader with vague references, and sometimes becomes so downright incoherent that it is difficult to ascertain what he is getting at. What is one to make, for instance, of such a succession of sentences as this, used in discussing the most favorable environment for speculation,—

> Again, the great free cities of the Renaissance, federated or standing alone, have not maintained their ground. Against this we have to place the economic conservatism of landed communities. And the evidence is even more involved than that.

The point is not that one need cavil frivolously over rhetorical considerations which most of our American writers on economic subjects flout habitually and, perhaps, out of sheer excess of he-manliness, but that Mr. Mottram has permitted some considerable sections of his work to become needlessly difficult, dull, and uncertain reading on account of them.

This is a regrettable lapse from an unusually excellent average. Also, as I have intimated, the author does not always state his economic causes and effects with as satisfying a completeness as could be wished and, without being a historian, one is able to suspect occasional gaps in his history. The Roman speculative period, for example, is notably missing. Still, after all reservations are made, the book retains substantial and valuable merits. It is commended to those who are interested in a more comprehensive understanding of the speculative element of society than can be gained from ticker tapes and newspaper financial pages, and who are sufficiently equipped in history and economics to fill in what is missing.

The second volume has just appeared of Hermann Hesse's "Im Alten Reich" (Grethlein), a volume containing historical and artistic biographies of Cologne, Dortmund, Innsbruck, Halle, Breslau, and many other cities.

Virginia Woolf

A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

"A love of life, a love of freedom, and of letters." . . . Thus does the *London Times* sum up the peculiar quality, —the clear-seeing brilliance,—which pervades all of Virginia Woolf's work. And how better can one characterize the author of ORLANDO and MRS. DALLOWAY, of TO THE LIGHTHOUSE and THE COMMON READER,—and now of A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN?

Louis Kronenberger says in the *New York Times*, "Mrs. Woolf speaks for her sex with as much fancy as logic, as much wit as knowledge, and with the imagination of a true novelist." "Mrs. Woolf's femininism," says the *London Saturday Review*, "has none of the nagging note, and it has been the cause of an exquisite piece of writing. The writer's perception of humanity does not mistake a vote for everything. Has it ever done as much for feminine happiness as a sofa, a door you can shut, a key you can turn, and money in the bank? On this text a most delicate discourse has been woven."

$2.00

HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY
383 Madison Avenue, New York

Walt Whitman

By HARRISON S. MORRIS

A brief, intimate biography based upon the recollections and researches of one of the younger group who surrounded Whitman in his later years. Mr. Morris accepts Whitman as he was, and writes without eulogy or protest; this candidness, together with his wide and deep appreciation of the best in Whitman's work, will commend him to all students of American literature as well as to Whitman enthusiasts. New points of view and significant details previously overlooked add much to the value of this important study. $1.50 a copy.

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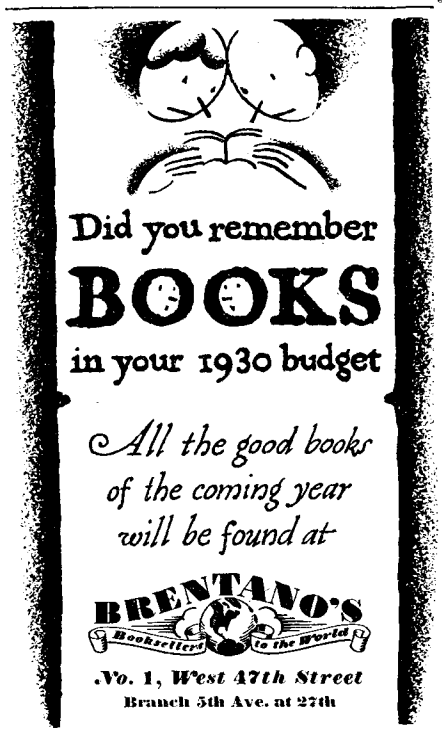
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Picture Contest

The winners in the Picture Contest conducted in the Children's Book Number of the Saturday Review were Louise P. Bull and Alan Dodd. Both submitted perfect answers. The former selected as prize "Hitty," by Rachel Field (Macmillan), and the latter, "Courageous Companions," by Charles J. Finger (Longmans, Green).

The correct answers follow:

No. 1—Kipling
Just So Stories

No. 2—Dickens
Christmas Carol

No. 3—Abbott
Franconia Stories

No. 4—Dodgson
Alice in Wonderland

No. 5—Alcott
Little Women

No. 6—Harris
Uncle Remus

No. 7—Sidney
Five Little Peppers

No. 8—Clark
Dotty Dimple at School

No. 9—Clemens
Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

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Some Recent Fiction

Who Killed the General?

"G.B." By W. F. MORRIS. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD H. NASON

A WAR story with a mystery background is difficult to write. All the standard props are unavailable. Mysterious old uncles who leave wills in inconvenient places did not appear in the zone of the armies, and left their wills at home when they did. The female element must be represented by either a nurse or a Red Cross girl, and the type does not allow of much variation. Hunchbacks, one-legged beggars, blind Chinamen, and what-not are barred. And as all goings and comings were closely watched by very unimaginative Military Police, the characters cannot wander through the story at will. We would assume then, that in this book the characters are officers, soldiers, and nurses, and that the mystery element consists of "Button button, who stole the map?" "A German spy" replies the bright young man who has not read the book. Right the first time. I think perhaps—well, no matter.

Let us begin by saying that Mr. Morris can write. He has in him that too rare quality of being able to make a written description live. His descriptions of action, of shells bursting, of dead, of attacks, of a soldier's sensations are the best I have read any where. I like especially the description of the docking of the leave boat at daybreak by "a rain washed quay," where the arc lights still burned, and of the arrival in London in the early morning. "From the pavement outside the station I surveyed the world and found it very good. I sniffed the smoky, petrol, tar-block smell with dilated nostrils. I read the old familiar advertisements of pills and mustards, I took deep draughts of the good old London air." For "London" read "New York," and you have a picture that a great many old soldiers will recognize. Yes, as long as Mr. Morris dips his pen into his own heart's blood he writes beautifully, but when he dips it into the ink—well, it's a sad waste of ink.

The mystery part of the story is presented at once, as we show our children the dessert; this to be theirs if they eat all the rest of the meal. "If you will wade through three hundred odd pages of nothing much, I will tell you who the general is, and how he came to be dead in the same room with the pretty girl." Knowing generals as I do, I could hazard a guess, but I was wrong. There is nothing in this book that could not be read at any New England Dorcas society. A bow to Mr. Morris for that. He scrambles the plot, and has three different persons tell the story, some in the first and some in the third person, and he asks the reader pitifully through a great many pages, "Who killed the general?" until one is inclined to shriek, "Why ask me? *I* didn't do it!" but he doesn't make any attempt to sell his book by being dirty. He could have been, too, without the least effort.

We shall not destroy the interest in the book by giving away the solution, but we will say this, that we thought it was feeble. The workmanship is poor. The mechanical parts of the story shriek aloud to the heavens. The reader can see the wheels going around, and in very wobbly fashion, too. We can see where certain parts of the work strongly resemble "Beau Geste" in their mechanics, but not—oh, no—not in their artistry. We smell a slight flavor of "The Spanish Farm," to us the best war book that has come out of the tight little island. And then, in the chapters on the escape, we are reminded very strongly of a certain standard work called "Les Grands Evasions de la Guerre" published in Paris. We read in "Falcons of France" a most interesting account of an escape from a German prison camp that the author did *not* make, and in "G.B." we read one, not so interesting, which the author may have made, but which closely resembles the combined escapes of the "Grands Evadés." Of course it must be admitted that a skilful author can write fiction in such a fashion that one feels it to be the stark truth, and that an unskilful one can write the truth so poorly that he will not be believed. Maybe Mr. Morris escaped from prison, but I doubt it.

There are too many characters in this book. When, in the last pages, we came face to face with the villain, we had to read the first few chapters over again to see where he came in. He did not earn his salary as a villain. There are two heroines that could have been left out, too, but they had to be dragged in by their party gowns to supply the love interest, without which we are told, no book can succeed. And as if this were not enough, there is a mis-print on page 129, that sets the story ahead ten years and leaves the reader hopelessly ensnarled, expecting to find all the characters are ghosts or that the hero is in an asylum and will soon wake up and find out the war has been over these many years.

So then we come to the end, and all is made clear, and we find out who killed the general. We cannot help but say, at this time, as might the child we mentioned in the first, "After having eaten all this gruel, this is pretty poor cake to get as a reward." But this, I believe, is a characteristic of all mystery stories.

Adah Isaacs Menken

THE WORLD'S DELIGHT. By FULTON OURSLER. New York: Harper & Bros. 1929. $2.

Reviewed by E. M. BENSON

ALTHOUGH repeatedly abusing our sense of verity, we are obliged to admit that Mr. Oursler's novelized biography of Adah Isaacs Menken, the darling of the '60's, "ham" actress, sculptress (putative), poet, having one less husband than the Wife of Bath (who as a precocious child of thirteen translated the Iliad into the French from the Greek), has held our interest in spite of the purple patches and the cheap magniloquent manner in which the author chose to tell his tale. He keeps his narrative at a steady gallop; tries, somewhat ridiculously, to be colloquial and witty; is occasionally accurate, understanding and sentient; but more frequently evasive, inaccurate, and apologetic.

Mr. Oursler picks up the thread of Adah Menken's life in 1851, when at the age of seventeen she was travelling through Texas as equestrienne in Draconi's Imperial Hippodrome. After 422 frenzied, cataleptic pages the author very tenderly leaves this charming lady in the Jewish section of the cemetery Montparnasse, more serenely happy, we imagine, than she had ever been during her life. It is interesting to conjecture why it was that Adah Menken, née Dolores Adios McCord of a Creole (not Negro!) mother, continued to remain a sincere convert to Judaism even after she had been divorced from Alexander Isaacs Menken, her first husband, but not, Mr. Oursler insists, her first lover! Is is not likely that the ritual of Judaism might have had its appeal to her dramatic as well as her religious sense? Mr. Oursler answers these questions with a peculiar Semitic sympathy and understanding.

Yet it seems paradoxical to us that Mr. Oursler, once having admitted that Adah was unable to bear her first husband a child, should have proceeded to accept the "child myth" of her marriage to the pugilist John C. Heenan. For the sake of fiction, we imagine, the author of "The World's Delight" proposes to believe that a boy was born to Adah of her marriage to the Benicia Battler. This unverified and unverifiable legend comes down to Mr. Oursler from the incandescent pen of Ed. James, one of Adah Menken's earliest biographers, and most unreliable, with Richard Northcott running a close second. Also for the sake of fiction (we do not forget Mr. Oursler's unshamefaced confession in his Postlude: "This is merely a tale, invented and garnished, with chronologies altered, facts displaced, to meet the author's fancy.") Mr. Oursler believes that Heenan, in a maudlin effort to fondle his infant son, fell to the floor with the child and crushed it to death. This melodramatic interlude smells rather badly of the movies.

With artificial animation—the author's prose characteristic throughout—we follow Adah's miasmic stage career, her success in "Fazio" and other melodramas in which she usually played the male rôles. We recall somewhat pathetically that Adah's tireless prayer to be Lady Macbeth if only for one performance was answered in 1858 when she played opposite the easily exasperated tragedian James E. Murdoch. What Mr. Oursler calls Mr. Murdoch's "artistic snobbery" was, we must remind the author of this book, not very far from a cruel but accurate estimate of Adah's dramatic ability. In his reminiscences, "The Stage," Mr. Murdoch writes (but Mr. Oursler neglects to quote it): "She poured out such an apostrophe to quiet demons, and her own dark purposes, that it would have puzzled anyone acquainted with the text to guess from what unlimited variorum edition she could have studied the part."

Not until Adah had made a "dismal fiasco" of her rôle as Lady Teazle in "The School For Scandal" did she decide to return to her horse and her tights before it was too late. This she did in 1861 and made a brilliant—one should say courageous!—appearance in Milner's "Mazeppa," a three act drama fashioned after Byron's romance. What brought the house down was Adah strapped to a not too tame horse led up a series of dangerous runways. Bitterly Adah recalled that this was the very play Murdoch advised her to turn to if she knew what was best for her!

Mr. Oursler does little more than mention the names of Robert Henry Newell and James Paul Barclay, the next two successive husbands of Adah Menken. Of her continental affinities, especially Swinburne and Dumas père, the author writes at considerable length. He is wholly justified in saying that to Swinburne Adah was a "symbol of all time's harlotry!" The poet's public repudiation in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of December 28, 1883 of his anonymously published poem "Dolorida," certainly inspired by Adah Menken, is an ignoble reflection on his character. In Dumas père, however, Adah sought and found refuge from a sorrowful world. She came to him impoverished and lonely and he comforted her with words if not with actions. For a more complete and more authentic account of this friendship we can do no better than refer you to Herbert Gorman's recent biography of the Prince of Pot-Boilers.

We have found "The World's Delight" readable and informing, albeit the author did not strain after the truth with a scholar's eyes. At least Mr. Oursler has the pleasure of knowing that he is Adah Menken's most fulsome biographer.

The Squirearchy

THE HAWBUCKS. By JOHN MASEFIELD. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

LIFE in the English shires more than thirty years ago, before the death of Queen Victoria, not unnaturally seems an idyllically simple and peaceful affair to harried moderns. But the difficult problem of keeping up large estates on vanishing incomes had already presented itself to the county gentry. In those days as now one of the best ways to avoid selling land, going into trade, or adopting other drastic remedies, was to marry into some family richer and probably newer by some hundreds of years than that of the holders. It is around such a marriage that John Masefield's new and very British novel centers.

His heroine, Carrie Harridew, though her father was poor in goods, was more than well provided for in the matter of looks, and consequently also in the matter of lovers. Seldom, in fact, save in the Odyssey can a girl have had so many suitors present themselves to her in so short a time. They spoiled her hunting with their proposals—and you may be sure that Mr. Masefield provided her with very good hunting, too—they fell on their knees before her at tea, at balls, and even in bedrooms. It is small wonder that finally she chose the quietest and best behaved of them, though his character and reputation were not attractive. His brother George, the head of the family, was also in the running and to the end seemed a likely winner, since Mr. Masefield presents him to us as the best product of the squirearchy, at once something of a saint, a good man to hounds, and of course a perfect sportsman. By design, the reader sympathizes with him rather than with the clever, city-loving lawyer brother who gets the lovely Carrie. But Mr. Masefield's capital story in a surprising yet logical finish bestows George's hand more suitably.

Besides making very pleasant reading as a narrative, Mr. Masefield has arranged his book to display successive pictures of English country life as it used to be, unadulterated by modern inventions and post-war problems. These pictures seem astonishingly fresh and well done,—perhaps because no one has bothered with such things recently. The hunt and the point-to-point are all one would expect from the author of "Reynard," and finally there is a good, old-fashioned snowstorm for the hero to battle against, and the humor of a hunt ball to set off the gloomy ending. It may seem at first glance only a frank, obvious, wholesome story; in reality it is considerably more. The effects are calculated and the people studied with an expert placing of details, while the action marches with a surety of purpose commanded by few living writers. His hawbucks are far more than country bumpkins or literary figures and will serve to rank this novel, if not with the narrative poems, at least higher than any previous prose by Mr. Masefield.

The Aspiring Suburbanites

THE STRAY LAMB. By THORNE SMITH. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. 1929. $2.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

WHEN François Rabelais set out to write the epic of guzzlers he had that *lachryma Christi*, that excellent Moscatello wine, to set before Gargantua and Pantagruel. Mr. Thorne Smith in "The Stray Lamb" in attempting the Rabelaisian creation of a guzzler in present day America has only synthetic gin for his hero. The not unexpected result is the difference between the wine of Moscatello and the gin of New York.

Mr. Smith, in attempting to write a lusty, joyous book of the assuaging of unhappiness among suburbanites by alcohol, has gone not much farther along the route of lusty humor than the smirking bawdiness of the vaudeville actor. His thesis of freedom—that "there is plenty of room in the world for a decent spirited drunkard"—is offered half apologetically and only after a series of minor explosions resulting from the changing of Mr. T. Lawrence Lamb, the hero, into a horse, a seagull, a kangaroo, a goldfish, a cur dog, a cat, a lion, and finally an unknown and outlandish combination of beast and bird.

In carrying his hero through these adventures, Mr. Smith creates some very amusing comedy of situation. In fact, the imaginative content of the book, while sticking to the venerable method of metamorphosis, is often excellent. Particularly good are the reactions and difficulties of Mr. Lamb while he lives within the feathers of a seagull. In handling these scenes, Mr. Smith is at his funniest and sometimes that is very funny indeed. But too often he lapses into wisecracking and unfortunately sometimes the wisecracks just fail to crack. Once or twice in this business of magic, Mr. Smith has deserted humor for pathos with not very satisfactory results.

The book is a comedy of morals typically American in its attitude and a definite product of a half-reformed Puritanism. Mr. Smith has followed the ancient rule that in America a writer may be just as smutty as he pleases provided there are no actual assignations upon the stage and in the end conventional virtue is triumphant. "The Stray Lamb" is preëminently successful after this formula as it provides several scenes lascivious enough to please such as like that sort of thing, but all of them end without sin, which should please all who are not in favor of sin.

The characterization is completely conventional, and the story, apart from the magic adventures of Mr. Lamb, is trite. An unhappy husband, who is slightly corpulent but a splendid fellow unappreciated by his pseudo-artistic wife, is brought by his ridiculous misadventures to the divorce court and afterwards into the honorable estate of matrimony with a beautiful underwear model. Thus all ends well and the aspiring suburbanite comes safe at last to the suburbanite ideal of freedom.

Englishmen in India

NIGHT FALLS ON SIVA'S HILL. By EDWARD THOMPSON. New York: The Dial Press. 1929. $2.50.

THIS is a novel of the English in India, taking place in 1900. In it one finds for the first time what one has always felt should exist somewhere in literature, a genuine love of the Indian country. Nicky, the heroine, has lived all her life in India, and can see the landscape without the homesickness, or the preconceptions of mystery or cruelty that color most European views of it. She is a wild Diana who delights in its untamed immensity, and through her eyes for the first time the reader sees the Indian forest as a scene with a beauty and a *genius loci* of its own.

Mr. Thompson evidently loves India, and writing of a time when Imperialism was at its most confident, he shows here and there the savage indignation against the English ruling classes that was so apparent in his "These Men, Thy Friends," but on the whole "Night Falls on Siva's Hill" is a straightforward love-story. It is excellently told, with humor, beauty, and power.

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Points of View

The Humanism of To-day

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In trying to estimate the last ten years of American writing, as the pause before a new decade invites one to do, I find myself most often thinking of those years as above all a display of creative energy. Energetic penmen have abounded, and yet a mood of dissatisfaction with their productions seems now to be effacing the enthusiasm of a few years ago. There is, in fact, an air of inevitability about the appearance of "The Modern Temper": it *should* come in the train of the events we have lived through. For what is Mr. Krutch's confession but the despair that hopefulness without sufficient knowledge for fulfilling itself is bound before long to engender? And what does "The Modern Temper" make more evident than the need for fresh ideas, fresh data, new modes of attack in our literary world?

It is not surprising, therefore, that the more active thinkers in literary circles are beginning to take cognizance of the ideas of the classical party in America and in particular to inquire into the contemporary version of Humanism formulated by Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More. Perhaps after a decade of expansion we shall now have a decade of concentration; we may shift our weight to the other end of the see-saw of values and, having esteemed the lyrical, turn to praising the reasonable. It is exceedingly difficult to say what will happen. Will our literary world, by virtue of its flabbiness, smother the opposition to the present ways of the Humanists by being amiable, by the appearance of generous agreement on many contentions, by a little head-shaking in mild reproof; in short, by the well-known process of disposing of opposition by simply absorbing it? Or will an impulse to order, to traditionalism, to classical standards gain the upper hand over our impulse to revolt, to glorify the contemporary, to be unique, and shall we have no more than a reaction to exuberant disorder? There are a dozen other contingencies.

I should like the privilege of stating the one I favor. First, I am hopeful that American writers in general will soon realize the need for a working stock of better ideas than those we have got along with since the war. These better ideas I believe the New Humanists supply; they are better in respect of scope, weight, truth, and universality, it seems to me, than the governing ideas of American writers in the year 1920. (I don't think that the New Humanists possess the *best* ideas accessible in our time, but not yet current; but, as Matthew Arnold pointed out, creative literary genius makes use of the best that is current at the time and does not set itself the task of tracking down the best that may be accessible. The ideas of the Humanists may fairly be said to be current.) If, then, we feel the inadequacy of our present ideas and sincerely wish for better ones, the Humanist system of ideas should come in for consideration on their intellectual merits. I mean that we will, for once, try to set aside a prejudice against the purely critical operations of the mind, that we will not take leave of our wits and see red if the word "moral" happens to be uttered with respect, that we will, on the contrary, try to get beneath the Humanist vocabulary in the places where it differs from ours and discover the idea.

Second, I am hopeful that the plain man in the library, the general reader who out of dissatisfaction with the quality of his existence looks to literature for help in growing toward ideal ends, will hear the clash of ideas between Humanist and Romanticist, and be interested. For the appeal of the Humanist is not to anything more recondite than common sense, and in fact the general reader is the very umpire he would choose for his argument. After striving to reduce Humanism to its essentials, it seems to me that it urges most of all the cultivation of a certain attitude toward one's self. It has been popular to believe that man is essentially one, that he is entirely within Nature, that he is naturally good and innocent, that he should trust his instincts: in short, that he should identify himself with the flow of his impressions and the constant upspringing of his impulses. To this the Humanist replies that the basic fact of human consciousness is a duality, that we are composed of a natural principle and a human principle, that self-development depends upon a struggle between the two principles, and that, since he is naturally indolent, man must labor to intensify and enlarge this struggle. In fine, he must not identify himself with the mechanical flow of his existence, but with something not our natural inclinations that makes for human-ness. Here we have two attitudes that can be entertained by man toward himself, each of great practical significance to the individual who holds one or the other.

I hope, thirdly, that the Humanists will correct certain defects of the imagination that up to now have resulted in their doctrine having a rather stark appearance. G. K. Chesterton for years has shown how entertaining orthodoxy can be. Robert Frost reveals how poetic essentially humanistic feelings may become. The French reactionaries have often written in glowing styles. In a word, if the American Humanists have failed in conferring glamor on their values, it is not because their values are inherently forbidding, but because they have unfortunately hit chiefly on negative ways of expression rather than on positive and appealing ones.

One need not be a complete subscriber to the Humanist credo, but only a sympathiser with modern man's effort to love and follow perfection (in which class I count myself), to accept the three points above: the superiority of Humanist ideas relative to popular literary ideas to-day; the importance of an attitude toward one's self that encourages activity in cultivating reason, elevating the imagination, and exercising the will, if there be such a thing; thirdly, the necessity for the heightening of the attractiveness of purely human values.

But there is a last point that interests me more than these. I am, it happens, an ingrained skeptic as to *how* certain ideas of human dignity and worth are to be comprehensively and thoroughly validated in experience. Important as it is to hold in the mind true opinions, better yet true ideas, yet the mind is only a part of our psychology, prejudiced in favor of itself and therefore not impartial toward the whole of our being. What is more, it is the weakest of our functions, far less developed than our senses, far less strong than our feelings. It is not enough merely to hold sound ideas, when one is in reality a continual disharmony of act, emotion, and thought, for what chance have sound ideas, educate ourselves as best we can, of coping with the immense cunning of the body and the power of the emotions? One may accept the intuition of the Humanists that man can achieve self-knowledge and self-mastery, and yet wonder in view of the "stubborn irreducible facts" of human personality, its biases, its self-love, its crazes, just how, by what technique, he can do so. Religion is founded on the same intuition, and even in its contemporary forms it pays more attention to methods for achieving religious insight than do the Humanists to perfecting a methodology for making the whole person humanistic. But religious technique as we know it to-day seems deplorably deficient in its psychological aspects, and one is left staring at the greatest need of our times, the need for a solution in practice, not simply on paper, of the major problem of mechanism and personal responsibility to which the New Humanists once more draw our attention and on which they hold it.

GORHAM B. MUNSON.
New York, N. Y.

Mrs. De Koven's Book

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

As a Frenchwoman particularly interested in the history of France and French society in the eighteenth century, permit me to write that I was surprised at the flippancy of the review of Mrs. de Koven's book: "Horace Walpole and Mme du Deffand," which appeared in the November 30th issue of the *Saturday Review*. The short and sarcastic comments about this work not only don't do justice, but do a great injustice, to it. To begin with, why this epithet of "popular" applied, with a prejudiced innuendo, to the book? If your critic means that it lacks the severe, heavy, meticulous, and indigestible apparatus with which so many scholarly writers smother the most delightful subjects, then, everybody would agree with him. Mrs. de Koven's book is popular in this, that she tries to make it pleasant to the reader, and she succeeds in doing so. Instead of crushing her story under the weight of footnotes, references, index marks, pedantic arguments, she writes about these two tactful, witty, refined gentle people of the most civilized society of modern times with the tact, wit, and refinement of a society woman who might belong to the same delicate world. And, true to the French tradition, which was for a time gospel even to the English, her lightness of touch does not prevent her from looking with a keen and penetrating insight into the psychology of her two protagonists. She gives of this unusual relationship a very understanding and, in many points, new study. Personally, I do not recall any French books written on the subject which give Walpole's side of the story with such fairness and equanimity.

Also, there is a kind of contradiction in your critic's attitude. He seems first to treat jokingly Mrs. de Koven's erudition, and mentions the "three fat and now expensive" compilations of letters of Mrs. Paget Toynbee. Why then not mention the hitherto unpublished letters which Mrs. de Koven quotes in her book and which do throw new light in the story?

A letter is not another review and I must conclude, but not without saying that, in my own experience as a lecturer in this country I have found few, but very few persons who know anything about this "strange romance," and that Mrs. de Koven's book ought to be welcome to the great group of American readers who are fond of psychological and entertaining biographies.

ALINE CARO-DELVAILLE.
New York.

Russell *vs.* Powys

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

I feel inclined to write you in an absolutely sincere vein concerning the debate held on the evening of December 13, between Mr. Bertrand Russell and Mr. J. C. Powys on the subject of "Modern Marriage." I stayed at the Mecca Auditorium from 8:30 till 10:30, when I had to go and so could not hear Mr. Russell's rejoinder to his opponent, but I heard Mr. Heywood Broun's introduction of the debate, Mr. Russell's presentment of his case for failure of "modern" marriage, and Mr. Powys's refutation of it.

Let me say honestly that I was uncomfortable all the time and was glad to have to go. Yet I have the deepest respect for the talent of both Mr. Russell and Mr. Powys, and never having had a chance to hear either the latter or Mr. Heywood Broun, I was glad of this opportunity. Now, talent I saw spent with great lavishness through the evening. What I missed and longed for through those two hours was a little seriousness in dealing before five thousand people with a serious subject, but seriousness never appeared. The tone was throughout a light, happy banter; people laughed a great deal and wanted to laugh more, that was all. That there was disappointment on the more intelligent faces was evident. I thought I could see many people watching Mr. Russell with some amusement as he gravely made notes of what his opponent was saying: making notes during such an evening was a false note, if I may use the language of the debaters themselves.

At no moment was the real subject approached. Mr. Powys, who, during the first five minutes, sounded as if he was going to have the better of the arguments, because the audience thought him in earnest, plunged headlong into the three subdivisions of Mr. Russell, and each one was a hole. No one pointed out that there is no such thing as "modern" marriage, marriage having always been what it now is. Nobody said that the problems of married people are those of all people, whether of different or of the same sex, living in intimate association and therefore there is less a question of marriage *vs.* free love than a question of wisdom *vs.* folly, or of politeness *vs.* rudeness. Several times Mr. Powys felt like being outspoken, and every time he drew curiously near the truth. At one moment he actually rambled into a statement of his belief in sacramental grace, and I thought myself at my theological college again—a bewildering impression. But jesting and laughing promptly set in again. Instances of faulty logic were innumerable.

In the interests of American culture I think that such a way of approaching a great moral question should be discouraged. Those of us who want fun know where to look for it, from unrivalled specialists. People might have smiled a few times during the Mecca Auditorium debate; laughing was out of place and, to be frank, sounded common.

ERNEST DIMNET.
New York City.

Differing Versions

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

A few days ago I picked up Mr. Willis Fletcher Johnson's biography of "George Harvey: a Passionate Patriot," and, recalling a fragment from it that had haunted me ever since I encountered it last summer in a daily newspaper's quotation from the *Saturday Evening Post*, in which some portions of the biography appeared, I looked eagerly in the Index for the reference to the circumstances of Harding's nomination for the Presidency. This led me to page 278, on which Mr. Johnson relates the summoning of Senator Harding before the small group of Republican leaders who were on the point of bringing his nomination to pass. Let me quote what was said to him: " 'But first, Senator Harding,' said Harvey with impressive solemnity, 'I wish you to assure these gentlemen and myself upon your sacred honor and before your God, that you know of no reason, arising out of anything in your past life, why you should not stand with confidence before the American people as a candidate for the highest office within their gift.' "

There, indeed, was the demand upon Harding, just as I had remembered it; and, a few lines later on, there was also Harding's well-remembered reply: "Gentlemen, there is no such reason." This, by the way, "he said firmly."

So far, so well. But what of the interval between the asking and the answering of Harvey's question? In Mr. Johnson's book it is accounted for as follows: "Harding was profoundly moved. He was silent for a moment. Then he said: 'Gentlemen, I should like to be alone for a little while, if you please.' And he went into the adjoining room and closed the door. For nearly fifteen minutes he remained there, and then returned, still deeply moved, yet calm and confident."

Was that exactly what I had seen quoted from the *Saturday Evening Post* last summer? Fortunately a file of that journal was not beyond reach, and here is Harding's answer to Harvey, as it was given there: "Gentlemen, I should like to be alone a little with my God." No "if you please" followed.

Now, in the name of all that is authentic in historic record, why should this beautiful story be so lamentably denatured? Look here upon this picture, and on this! For Harding "alone a little while with [his] God" Mr. Johnson now offers the pale substitution of Harding "alone for a little while"—by himself. There is no modification of the answer that he brought back to the anxious inquirers: "Gentlemen, there is no such reason." But brought from a mere communion with himself, how much less impressive it is than when it was brought from a communion with God! The loss to American biography is irreparable. Was it incurred in the hope of lifting a certain weight from the shoulders of Divine Providence?

VERIDICUS.

The Wit's Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 75. Encyclopædia Britannica Ode as previously announced.

Competition No. 76. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best short rhymed poem called "First Flight." (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, not later than the morning of January 13.)

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A Czechoslovakian Letter

By J. Evilyn Williams

TO the majority of non-Slavs present-day Czechoslovak literature is summed up in two persons, Karel Capek and Frantisek Langer. But brilliant as they are individually, they have had comparatively little influence on the modern movement in Czechoslovakia. Since his last play, "Adam the Creator," which was lukewarmly received, Capek has written only a book of short stories, and has been for some time primarily occupied with his daily comments on men and things appearing in the *Lidové Noviny*, one of the best Czech newspapers, and with the joys of gardening. Frantisek Langer had much success with his latest comedy, "The Conversion of Ferdys Pistor," which shows how religion comes to a hotel porter through a zealous Salvation Army lass; but one is still waiting for a second "Peripherie." Of the leading Czechoslovak novelists, poets, etc., very little is known abroad, because of the lack of translation.

Czechoslovak literature, like the state itself, is passing through a period of transition. Up to the present it is absorbing from abroad, in every sphere of life, business, art, architecture, and literature, and tends to imitate western models, rather than to create for itself. The book markets are flooded with translations from English, American, French, German, Scandinavian, Russian, and other moderns. The pre-war literature of revolt has lost its *raison d'être*, and a new national school has not yet come to take its place, although there are several well-defined groups carrying on the national spirit in a modified form. Chief among these are the group known as the legionaries, who fought on almost every battle front in the last war.

The war has been, and still is, the chief topic for the novelist in this country—not so much war in the abstract, as realistic accounts of the adventures of the legionaries in Russia and Siberia. The most important members of this group are Josef Kopta and Jaroslav Kratochvil. Kopta has just completed the third part of a trilogy, the first two volumes of which describe the terrible fighting with the Bolsheviks, and the tragedy of the march across Siberia to Vladivostock. The third volume, called "Tretí Rota Doma" (The Third Company at Home), shows the disillusionment of the legionaries on their return to the new "freed" country. Kopta makes himself the mouthpiece of the common soldier; Kratochvil, on the other hand, is more of an artist, and interpreter of events. His "Cesta Revoluce" (The Way of Revolution), a tragic picture of Siberian warfare, is followed by a new novel, a Siberian "Anabasis," all of which has not yet appeared. From its early parts, however, it promises to be a really great Czech work.

All who would understand the many-sidedness of modern Czechoslovakia should study the personality of Jaroslav Durych, as seen in his poems, plays, novels, essays, and pamphlets. This *enfant terrible* of Roman Catholicism is very prolific, and has followed his volume of poems, "Paninky" (Country Lasses), and his novel, "Na Horách" (On the Heights), by a historical work in three volumes, called "Blondení" (Erring). This is a detailed study—the first of the modern biographical type to appear in this country—of Count Wallenstein, the famous general of the Thirty Years War.

K. J. Benes's novel, "Rudé Lêto" (Red Summer), is the first of a cycle, which aims at giving a complete picture of post-war Czechoslovak society. It deals with the summer of 1920, when Bolshevism was threatening the country. Emil Vachek is a prolific writer, artist, journalist, and well-known naturalist, who succeeds best in realistic novels describing the lowest strata of social life. His latest novel, "Parasit," gives a detailed picture of post-war life in that class. Jaroslav Maria gives pessimistic, pathological studies of modern society, as may be seen from his novel in three parts, called "Orlové a Strîzlíci" (Eagles and Wrens). A. Longen's novel, "Herecka" (An Actress), will be of value to those interested in Czech artistic and stage life, since it gives an account of the life of his wife, an actress of the modern school, and of her set.

Of literary criticism of a particularly scholarly kind there is no dearth in Czechoslovakia. The death of Czechoslovakia's greatest poet, Otakar Brezina, has brought forth a crop of appreciations, studies, etc., chief among which are "Dialogues with Otakar Brezina" (Hovory s Otakarem Brezino), by Mrs. Pickova-Saudkova, and Jakub Deml. These two works by members of Brezina's intimate circle, the one being the wife of one of the poet's best German translators, and the other, one of the chief representatives of the Czech Catholic Renaissance, reproduce the delightful conversation of a man who only revealed himself to his dearest friends. Frantisek Göetz, the chief representative of the younger generation, will publish shortly a book dealing with the main trends in contemporary writers, called "Tvar Stoleti" (The Face of the Century). One of the cleverest theoreticians of the hypermodern school in art, architecture, and literature, Karl Teige, brings two works, "On Humor, Clowns, and Dadaists" (O humoru, clownecz, a dadistech) and "Modern Architecture in Czechoslovakia" (Moderni architektura v ceskoslovensku). Frank Tetauer has brought out an exhaustive monograph on the dramatic and philosophical work of G. B. Shaw, with caricatures by Capek, and an English summary.

Poetry to-day is exclusively lyric, and is in the hands of the younger generation, the older, pre-war generation having died or, as in the case of Bezruc, ceased to write any more. In Czech verse, one sees very strongly the influence of French, and even the "revolutionaries" to-day are revolutionary in the French manner. There are no outstanding names among the moderns, unless one mentions Vitezslav Nezval, a most exuberant creator, Jaroslav Seifert, the only realist among them, and Josef Horá, who in one of his latest works, "Chords in the Wind" (Struny ve vetru), has given beautiful examples of what one might call Einsteinian lyrics, or lyrics of pure time and space.

Foreign Notes

THE eighth volume of the "General History of the Peoples of the World," edited by Professors Halphen and Sagnac (the previous volumes of which were reviewed here) has recently come from the press of Alcan & Co., Paris. It treats of the "Beginnings of Modern Times" (the Renaissance and the Reformation) and is the joint work of Professors H. Hauser and A. Renaudet. It is of special interest, as it deals with the origins and first manifestations of rationalism and the scientific spirit in the realm of thought, and with the distant and immediate causes of the great schism which broke the unity of Christendom. These momentous subjects are handled with scholarly competence, great surety in the details, and illuminating breadth of view. There is no less mastery in the chapters referring to the economic development, touching such crucial points as the relation of the conquest of the New World to the economic revolution, the birth of commercial capitalism, the growth of banking. This new volume, with the former ones, makes the "General History" one of the best instruments of work of the specialists, and, at the same time, luminous and interesting reading for the cultivated élite.

Walter von Molo, whose historical novels have won him high standing in Germany, has now published a romance of the present entitled "Die Scheidung" (Vienna: Szolnay). His new tale turns upon the problem of marriage and divorce, considered from the man's standpoint. It is an interesting portrayal of a modern marriage and the reactions of its principals.

The sixth volume of the German Official History of the war has recently appeared (Berlin: Mittler). It continues the narrative of the autumn campaign of the German forces in the Western and Eastern theatres from November 4 until the end of the year 1914. It is liberally provided with maps, orders of battle, and tables of movements of troops, and has special chapters which give the French and British accounts of the operations.

Ezra Pound is editing the text of the Italian medieval poet, Guido Cavalcanti, and is to provide it with a complete parallel translation. Cavalcanti's works, which are famous for their grace and elegance, are in all the classical Italian forms. The poet was banished during the Ghibelline feuds for trading with their enemies.

The three English works to be recommended to the French Femina Vie Heureuse Committee for the selection of one book to receive the prize for 1929-30 are "Portrait in a Mirror," by Charles Morgan, "Egg Pandervil," by Gerald Bullett, and "The Squire's Daughter," by E. M. Mayor.

The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

SANDRO BOTTICELLI AND THE FLORENTINE RENAISSANCE. By Yukio Yashiro. Boston: Hale, Cushman & Flint. 1929. $15.

One reads Professor Yashiro's new revised edition of his "Sandro Botticelli" with a growing sense that it was needed in the literature of art. This cheaper edition, which has been eagerly expected by those who could only covet the original three-volume limited edition now out of print, contains sixteen handsome color plates and 170 half-tone illustrations. These pictures speak out with the scholarly text, and those who think while they look can compose their own history of one of the greatest geniuses of the Florentine Renaissance.

Belles Lettres

Reading. By *Theodore Wesley Koch*; The Essence of Poetry, by *Sir Rennell Rodd*; Standards of Value in Fiction, by *Franklyn Bliss Snyder*. Dayton, O.: University of Dayton.

Essays toward Truth. Selected by *Kenneth Allan Robinson, William Benfield Pressey, James Dow McCallum*. Holt. $2.

Shakespeare in Wall Street. By *Edward H. Warren*. Houghton Mifflin. $1.

Shakespeare and "Sir Thomas Moore." By *Samuel A. Tannenbaum*. New York: Tenny Press.

Biography

FOCH. My Conversations with the Marshal. By Raymond Récouly. Appleton. 1929. $3.

Ever since the war M. Récouly has been more or less associated with Maréchal Foch's office in matters of publicity; in view of this familiarity with the background his "Conversations" are decidedly disappointing. "I have reproduced with minute fidelity, with almost photographic exactitude, the words actually spoken to me by the Marshal. My memory is naturally excellent, and, enhanced as it is by long professional practice, I can easily retrace any conversation, however lengthy, word for word, without alterations or omissions." One can only conclude that Foch had very little time to devote to his interlocutor, for the conversations recorded are hardly more than hasty snatches of talk, at best extremely superficial and at times hardly more than random fragments. They cover more than fifty topics, and even so more than one topic is made up by lumping together brief comments on widely different matters.

Only twenty of the fifty-four titles deal with the war: the rest set forth rather offhand comments on men and events of the following years;—in large part they are scoldings at Clemenceau and others for refusing to accept Foch's fixed project of the Rhine frontier. Those dealing with the war would have had some interest in 1920: at the present time they are mere hasty outlines of matters that have been set forth long ago much more fully and accurately. We are given even the familiar stirring picture of the 42nd Division making the decisive attack on September 9 and turning the tide of the Marne: long ago the Commander of this division explained clearly that the attack never took place. Here and there, however, one or two new points appear (without the author quite realizing what they imply)—such as the efforts of the French to interfere in the appointments to high posts in the British staff in 1914.

M. Récouly explains that the book was submitted to Foch and approved by him "a few years ago." On second thought, however, Foch stopped its publication. May we not take this as a final and definitive criticism; a thing that does Foch more credit than all the rhetorical superlatives the author showers upon him?

The Life of Thomas E. Watson. By *William W. Brewton*. Atlanta: Brewton.

Writings Ascribed to Richard Rolle, Hermit of Hampole. By *Hope Emily Allen*. Heath.

Messalina. By *Maurice Magre*. Carrier.

The Private Life of Lady Hamilton. By *Albert Flament*. Carrier. $2.

The Life and Times of Laurence Sterne. By *Wilbur L. Cross*. New Edition. Yale University Press. $5.

The Memoirs of Casanova. Edited by *Madeleine Boyd*. Modern Library. 95 cents.

My People. By *Arthur Gleason* and *"A. G."* Morrow.

A Sketch of Chester Harding, Artist. Edited by *Margaret E. White*. Houghton Mifflin.

Drama

THE ITALIAN COMEDY. By Pierre Louis Duchartre. Day. 1929. $10.

It is fortunate that M. Duchartre's authoritative book on the "Commedia dell' Arte" has finally been translated into English. It will deservedly reach a far larger audience with the deft and sympathetic translation Mr. Randolph T. Weaver has made of it. "The Italian Comedy" is a noteworthy example of bookmaking. It is well printed and contains all of the valuable illustrations of the original French edition, with many new and interesting illustrations from a hitherto unknown collection of engravings recently discovered in the Museum at Stockholm.

M. Duchartre's book presents a vivid cross section of the beginnings, the rapid growth, and subsequent influence on European stages of the "Commedia dell' Arte." He manages to catch the buoyant, [illegible] excitement of this restless cloud [illegible] pestuous theatricality which passed [illegible] towns and courts of Europe in the [illegible] teenth and eighteenth centuries, [illegible] contemporary arts and literature with a kind of immemorial freshness. To-day a scene from Molière, a canvas of Watteau, or a worn engraving of Callot are all we have to recall for us the splendors of its full-blown conceits. The author has gleaned from every source well-ordered information which makes this volume a complete seismographic record of one of the greatest eruptions of the comic spirit in all times.

Judas Iscariot. By *J. Lewis Milligan*, Toronto: Ryerson Press.

The Appleton Book of Christmas Plays. Edited by *Frank Shay*. Appleton. $2.50.

Plays of the Irish Renaissance. By *Curtis Canfield*. $3.

Eighteenth Century Comedy. Edited by *W. D. Taylor*. Oxford. 80 cents net.

Fiction

LOW RUN TIDE and LAVA ROCK. By Elliot Paul. Liveright. 1929. $2.50.

This volume contains two short novels, contrasting studies in American communities. "Low Run Tide" is laid in an old

(*Continued on next page*)

THE GOLDEN STONE

On Sale December 26th!

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The Dutton Prize Mystery for January

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Maine fishing town, left behind by the development of civilization as the ports of Sussex by the receding sea. "Lava Rock" takes place near an engineering camp in a desert in the West, where a city springs up, has a tumultuous being, and vanishes when the dam is done. Mr. Paul's feeling for setting is so strong that the human action of the stories seems like a play within a play, or a particular given only to exemplify the general. In Steuben, Maine, the Plummer family's loss of its leading position, which is completed by an unsuccessful try at rum-running, repeats in little the decay of the town, as "The Murder of Gonzago" repeats "Hamlet"; the crescendo and diminuendo of excitement among the laborers at Lava Rock simply sums up and emphasizes the invasion and retreat of life into the desert. Taken together, these novels form an interesting attempt to write in terms of communities or movements instead of individuals.

THE COMMON PROBLEM. By SARA LINDSAY COLEMAN. Doubleday, Doran. 1929. $2.

A naïve concoction of sweetness, young love, sunshine and shadow, heartache and misunderstanding is this romance by the widow of O. Henry. In a quaint little Southern town, Fay and William, tender childhood inseparables, grow up together picturing their wedded future. But when Will is twenty, a rich, handsome city chap, one Carlisle, cuts him out, and gives Fay a $2,000 engagement ring. Under peculiar circumstances, which point to the impecunious Will as a thief, the ring is lost, and the unhappy boy seeks New York as a sanctuary from his grief. There he wins fame as a playwright, and Fay meanwhile, her engagement broken, but still unreconciled to Will, also arrives in the metropolis, going thence to England with a celebrated actress. The war comes, in which all three young people do their bits. Poor Will is blinded in action and returns to his old home, where, miraculously, his sight is not restored, and faithful Fay finally becomes his bride.

THE LAST ENEMY. By IRIS BARRY. Bobbs-Merrill. 1929. $2.50.

Originality in literature comes sometimes from a startling and delightful idea, a *tour de force* notion that compels admiration because of its novelty and unexpectedness; and sometimes from a deep understanding of simple and humdrum things, an understanding that moves the heart as though by a new experience.

Miss Barry's novel has the first kind of originality. She conceives a community in which deaths cease to occur. There is no startling announcement of this,—only a gradual awakening of people, week after week, to the fact that no one is dying. At first there are general public felicitations, newspaper articles praising modern sanitation and medicine, and so on. Then, as births continue and inheritances are held up and the impending social situation is seen, with murder and suicide rapidly increasing, the tone of discussion changes. Society comes to the point of hysterical prayer for death. When a natural death is at last reported, and it is felt that the spell is broken, there is general rejoicing,—though the few, including the reader, sorrow because the sacrifice had to be a little girl whom they had grown to love, taken by typhoid.

Such is the dramatic idea that Miss Barry seized upon for the theme of this novel, and carried out, indeed, in a workmanlike manner. Some of the characterization is really good: the talk of Griffiths and Susy, and of Roy and Susy, could not be written by one unable to understand the tragic complexity and contradictoriness of human nature. But on the other hand much of the characterization is merely typical, sketched quickly for its perfunctory services in the plot.

The style has the same unevenness: the talk of Susy—"I've been howling my eyes out," and "he's all butter and honey to me"—and occasional descriptive phrases—"thin curdled mist . . . smudged romantic haloes round the lights from the window of rooms"—are fresh and interesting; but other parts of the story are written simply as a capable but conventional filling in of the plot. The story's the thing in this book.

FIELD OF HONOR. By DONN BYRNE. Century. 1929. $2.

Donn Byrne must have been in sardonic mood when he entitled his last book "Field of Honor," for it is one of the increasing list of the literature of disillusion with the glory of war. Strung on a slender and frequently broken thread of the romance between an Irish loyalist squire and his rebel wife, whose father had been hanged by the British, we have a series of episodes in the Napoleonic wars: Nelson at Trafalgar, Wellington at Waterloo, Wellesley and Moore in the Peninsula; the affair between the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon*, and some pictures of poets, Wordsworth, Moore, Shelley, in their lesser moment, and more pertinently to the author's intention, the weak-witted king, the dissolute and dishonest Prince Regent, and various unpleasant prurient ladies,—and Lord Castlereagh.

In order to give this view of war from behind the arras, Byrne has made the protagonist of the romance, Garret Dillon, honest, but, one fears, a trifle stupid and apt to be deceived by Castlereagh, whose claim to be a much misunderstood and hard laboring patriot is too patently a sentimental attempt to win the reader's good will. On the other hand, the author makes a case for Bloody Castlereagh as the real foe and conqueror of Napoleon, showing him struggling against the indifference of the British people, the stupidity and opposition of the government, the incompetence of generals, and the treachery of subsidized allies.

The book is not pleasant, with its varied views of human frailty, and the bad faith of princes. The episodic treatment (so popular of late) is occasionally bewildering, and, on one or two occasions slightly ridiculous, as when we are asked to believe that a frail old gentleman, the Grande Mestre of the Masons, is the cause of Europe's downfall. But it is never dull, although one could wish that human virtue might shine through it more powerfully if only to heighten the contrast and lend values to the evil. One is disinclined to believe that life—even in time of war—is quite as much of "a suck and a sell and the end but threadbare crêpe and tears," as it is made out to be.

FIVE AND TEN. By FANNIE HURST. Harper. 1929. $2.50.

Miss Hurst tells with unbridled intensity the story of John Rarick, chain store millionaire, and of his family—Avery the son, Jennifer the daughter, and Jenny the wife. "Five and Ten" reads as if Miss Hurst's chief concern were the way of the fabulously rich. She enumerates in suffocating detail the things by which they are surrounded, describes the difficulties in the way of their attaining normality, and sheds many tears over their complete unhappiness. The novel might well have been sub-titled: "A Study in Frustration." Rarick poured his money into charities and into fantastically expensive playthings for his spare hours, but he was a failure as husband and father; Avery and Jennifer tried—not too hard, to be sure, though sincerely—to keep themselves decent, but no one could help them or even sympathize; Jennie deserted completely her natural instincts and found herself falling in love with a gigolo. And the trouble with them all was that they had too much money for their limited stock of common sense. The novel, therefore, is intended to be a tragedy of circumstance. The fact that it frequently turns into a tract exposing the misery of the over-rich is regrettable.

As entertainment, "Five and Ten" is pretty fair. Its apparently limitless energy carries us over the many rococo passages describing the Raricks' sumptuosity and dulls the blemishes on Miss Hurst's not quite convincing representation of the younger generation. Pages of impressive narrative are sandwiched between long-winded stretches of pretentious exposition, but nevertheless the narrative as a whole somehow manages to come out on top. The deaths of Avery and Jenny are excellent, and Jennifer's lingering misery arouses our genuine sympathy. About the conclusion of the book there can hardly be two opinions: Miss Hurst, preacher, vanquishes Miss Hurst, novelist. Viewed from a distance, "Five and Ten," in addition to being a readable novel, is good popular sociology—apposite and tolerably sound. Many Americans will be glad to have the disadvantages of being rich so clearly explained.

DOCTOR FOGG. By NORMAN MATSON. Macmillan. 1929. $2.

This tale is an extravaganza, telling of a scientist who uses Herring Island, off the coast of Maine, for his radio experiments. Messages are intercepted here from non-earthly stations: cosmic sources beyond identification send innumerable broadcasts, the dials being fairly alive, we are told, with indecipherable communications; the only sender who is even partly understood by the doctor is the planet called by its inhabitants "M'lo." To make this M'lo more real to us, Mr. Matson provides a girl who has been conveyed from that planet to the earth. Word of the doctor's experiments reaches the mainland, and soon commercial exploitation and political jealousy make of Herring Island an inferno—a hell combining the worst features of Coney Island and the Christmas meeting of a learned society. The expected cutting of the Gordian knot of the plot occurs when the disappointed scientist blows his invention completely to bits and in company with the willing lady from M'lo rushes off to a thoroughly earthy bungalow.

Now all this is merely so much nonsense for a reader who has gone beyond Tarzan. Dull, pretentious, pointless—the story drags on until its less than two hundred pages seem like four or five hundred. Mr. Matson fatuously believes that he is satirical, very amusing, very penetrating. He is nothing of the sort, being simply ambitious far beyond his evident powers.

WAR AND PEACE. By *Leo Tolstoy*. Translated by *Louise* and *Aylmer Maude*. Oxford. $3.

BEST BLOOD. By *Margaret Hallett Lang*. Stratford. $2.

PETER WHIFFLE. By *Carl Van Vechten*. Modern Library.

"THE 17." By *Edwin C. Washburn*. Washburn.

BROKEN LIGHTS. By *Narena Easterling*. Four Seas. $2.

Juvenile

SILVER MAGIC. Edited and arranged by ROMER WILSON. Harcourt, Brace. 1929. $2.50.

Romer Wilson's collection of fairy stories, "Silver Magic," unlike some of the many collections that have appeared, brings together stories which a child would not be likely to find in other places. For not only are there good retellings of "Beauty and the Beast" and "Cinderella," but bits from the Gesta Romanorum and from several Irish sources. This is a volume for a child to explore for himself and enjoy for himself; some of the extracts are so brief that he might find fault were they read to him as "fairy stories."

Some of the collection, like the Norwegian "Boots," are horrible with the grotesque barbarism of the old fairy books. Although Mr. Wilson has in his little introductions attempted to draw the tales into the range of a child's own experience, he cannot succeed in taking from the collection its authentic tone of unreality so consistently and strikingly maintained that it seems to bound the whole world, as dreams do while we are having them. By right of this genuine mysteriousness and their vigor as narrative these stories are actually much closer to a child's mental experience than the output of the Crime Club, for instance, which is now proclaimed by the ten-year-old group as its favorite literature.

Violet Brunton's colored illustrations have charm, but nothing like the vitality of the stories themselves; her line drawings achieve a more satisfactory unreality.

OVER AND OVER STORIES. RED AND GREEN. By MARGARET and CLARENCE WEED. Lippincott. 1929. 75c each.

This collection of old and new stories and verses has been compiled in order to give to very young readers the three R's to which children are particularly responsive—Repetition, Rhythm, and Rhyme. They do this without fail. But, while it may assure them a certain psychological response, it does not insure them against dulness. Occasionally, however, it happens that the demands of vitality are answered as well as the psychological demands of the authors. For instance, the little poem of Thomas Hood's with its refrain:

A wig, little pig!
A pig in a wig!
Why, whoever before saw a pig in a wig!

The old tales have been edited to eliminate any references to cruelty or knavery that might startle a sensitive child. Terrifying dragons are carefully excluded according to the rules, but there is a tale about a little half chick, a two-legged cat, a three-legged dog, etc. It would seem that the rules have blazed before the authors so incessantly as to blind their imaginations.

ALANNA. By HELEN COALE CREW. Harpers. 1929. $2.

Alanna is the name of an entirely lovable little Irish girl who lives in Ballycooly, "a short length of dusty road lined along one side with seven little thatched and whitewashed cottages." All the members of the seven cottage families are introduced to us, from baby Pat in Alanna's own house to old Granny Lally, not even omitting the chickens and the pig and Black Molly, the Ballycooly cow, who is almost like one of the Malone family. And in addition there is uncle Roddy, home from the sea off and on, with a fiddle that plays the Little People themselves out of their hiding places until you almost see them, and sets everyday happenings to dancing rhymes.

In a most delightful way the author tells Alanna's story, first a bit of her life in Ballycooly and then of that long and eventful year in America, with aunt Judy and uncle Peter, when in spite of all the new and dazzling experiences her heart remains homesick for Ballycooly and her mother. How all ends happily you may read the book to find out—but you can guess a little if you listen to uncle Roddy tune up his fiddle and sing, while the neighbors gather around to listen—

Glory be, Alanna's home!
Put on the pitaties
To boil!
Wet up a cup o' tea!
Wash the childer's
Faces!

A MAP OF CHILDREN EVERYWHERE. By RUTH HAMBIDGE. Day. 1929.

Since small children are both ignorant and uncensorious they will doubtless be delighted with this map with its attractive coloring and profusion of small figures scattered over the face of the globe. Their elders, however, may very probably take amiss, despite the publishers' explanatory comment, the exaggerations and distortions of the map. No impressions are more tenacious than those formed in early youth, as anyone will attest who has gone through life subconsciously checking off the reality of geographical knowledge against the mental images formed in childhood. Deliberately to shrink the waters about Europe so as to make it appear a ferry ride from Greece to Alexandria, for instance, seems to us an entirely mistaken scheme. So, too, does it seem to us strange to make Switzerland, the country of Heidi, barren of all child life—as are also New Zealand and Madagascar—and Italy inhabited solely by a small boy perpetually strumming on a guitar. In themselves the figures presented are vivacious and attractive, even though in one of the dairy sections of the United States a youngster of about four years of age towers above the cow against which he leans. And, judiciously supplemented with a parent's comments, there is, to be sure, much information to be derived from Miss Hambidge's map. But it needs such supplementing. Otherwise it were best to regard it merely as designed for amusement and not for instruction at all.

TOMSON'S HALLOWE'EN. By MARY and MARGARET BAKER. Duffield. 1929. $2.

The arrival of a new book by Mary and Margaret Baker is a joyous event. "Tomson's Hallowe'en" is a worthy successor to the "Black Cats and the Tinkerer's Wife" and all the other original and lovely books that these talented sisters have been producing lately. Tomson is a black, sagacious creature with the independent turn of mind characteristic of kind. One Hallowe'en the witch, his mistress, assumes a domestic rôle and decides to stay at home and brew a mysterious concoction. But Tomson and the broom are loathe to miss the fun and go off on their own to enjoy themselves. Their adventures include the bringing together of a pair of lovers. Tomson, with a very amusing scepticism for a witch's cat, uses all the proper ceremonies appropriate to the time and place. And behold! they work miraculously!

To a cat lover, Mary Baker's silhouettes will be a joy and the witches carnival will add a thrill to any small child's Hallowe'en.

MUD AND GLORY. By JAMES M. NEVILLE. Duffield. 1929. $2.

In the last few moments of play and with one chance to take the lead from Yale, a befuddled Princeton quarterback runs blindly towards his own goal. This is the center of "Mud and Glory" around which Mr. Neville has constructed his story of college football. Into it for good measure he has injected a love interest.

Football games and scrimmages and the mental attitudes of the players have been well handled, but the publishers apparently ignored the matter of editing and proofreading. Mistakes in the author's manuscript have been perpetuated with the printer's typographical errors thrown in for good measure. Quotation marks have been recklessly squandered and experiments conducted in the matter of tense sequence.

NINE SHORT PLAYS. Edited by M. JAGENDORF. Macmillan. 1928. $2.50.

Most of the plays in this collection were written by different authors and selected because of their fitness for production by boys and girls of from seven to seventeen. For the most part they live up to their requirements. They are simple, often fanciful in

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theme, making little demand upon the emotions and satisfying the youthful craving to dress up and act a part. Some have dancing and music and conversation in verse and in prose; some are plays of fairy tale and folk-lore, of clowns and Columbines and even of present-day policemen and traffic towers from our own Fifth Avenue, and yet one misses something in the collection as a whole,—something that seems so often to be conspicuously lacking when grown-ups sit down to write plays for children. By this we do not mean that children should always write their own plays, though this, we grant, is an excellent idea all round. But we do mean that most plays for children fail because they so seldom possess vigor and spontaneity, genuine humor, and unforced fancies.

We should prefer any day to see children performing some play far beyond their powers as actors and producers because it held them, than to have them set down to such rather slim dramatic fare as this. For to our way of think this type of play is negative,—it lacks the interest of old tales resurrected and performed by children with their own interpretations, while it does not contribute the product of more mature imaginations to the growing consciousness of seven to seventeen.

With the exception of "A Tale from India," by Florence Bradley Moore, which seems to us a natural and simply dramatized folk tale, the little plays all suffer from a sense of being written down to children. One feels also a rather general effort to be whimsical, a labored gaiety that should never enter into this sort of thing. Practically, however, the book will be helpful in its diagrams, costume plates, and directions for staging the various plays. All are at least actable, if uninspired.

REDDY. By MARY BIDDLE FITLER. Harpers. 1929. $2.

Reddy, the poor but not exactly humble son of Widow Macmanus, is the Great High Master of the Red Lions of Riverton, and Stocky, the less experienced scion of wealthy Mr. Gardner, is his assistant. Thanks to both, and their gang, we have a charming story somewhat of the *genre* of "Mrs. Wiggs." The plot has three peaks, each higher than the one before it. In the first part the Red Lions scheme to defeat the Gray Grizzlies of the Delaware's opposite shore. The second part, containing the turkey bargain with Mr. Sweet and the delicious humor of Mr. Garner's breakfast, concerns Mike the Motorman and his family's Christmas. The last third, and the best, tells how to solve a cash-shortage and make a man of yourself at the same time. There are throat-tightenings here and the book comes to port on a wave of very genuine emotion.

The value of the tale lies in the appeal of homely happenings contrived or remembered with a loving skill. It does not need the dedication to tell one that these chapters overflow with Mrs. Fitler's maternal observations. Every page is watermarked with that something which must escape the spinster. There is no need here to call in the machinery of thrills. And yet the book must be exciting, for already this advance copy has been the cause of several youngsters breaking the bedtime laws of the adult Medes and Persians.

THE REAL PICTURE BOOK. Rand McNally. $2.50.

WASHINGTON, D. C. By *Frances Margaret Cox*. $2.

THE SUNBONNET BABIES A B C BOOK. By *Eulalie Osgood Groves*. Rand McNally.

BLUE PIGEONS. By *Emma Gelders Sterne*. Duffield. $2.

THE STRAWBERRY GIRLS. By *Helen M. Dulfus*. Duffield. $2.

PRINCE OF THE PALE MOUNTAINS. By *Anne D. Kyle*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.

CALEB AND THE FRIENDLY ANIMALS. By *Albert L. Webster*. Duffield. $2 net.

A BOY SCOUT ROUND THE WORLD. By *Palle Huld*. Coward, McCann. $2.

THE JUNIOR ANAGRAM BOOK. By *John, James*, and *Judith West*. Dodd, Mead. $1.75.

JIP AND THE FIREMAN. By *Helen S. Read*. Edited by *Patty Smith Hill* and *Mary M. Reed*. Scribners. 60 cents.

MR. BROWN'S GROCERY STORE. By *Helen S. Read*. Edited by *Patty Smith Hill* and *Mary M. Reed*. Scribners. 60 cents.

MARY AND THE POLICEMAN. By *Helen S. Read*. Edited by *Patty Smith Hill* and *Mary M. Reed*. Scribners. 60 cents.

BILLY'S LETTER. By *Helen S. Read*. Edited by *Patty Smith Hill* and *Mary M. Reed*. Scribners. 60 cents.

BUSY CARPENTERS. By *James S. Tippett*. World Book Co.

A CARGO OF STORIES FOR CHILDREN. By *Emma Lorne Duff*. McClelland & Stewart.

WHEN SALLY SEWS. By *Helen Perry Curtis*. Macmillan. $2.

SAUCY AND ALL. Verses by *Helen Shackleton*. Illustrated by *Kathleen Shackleton*. Macmillan. $2.

Miscellaneous

WE BUILD A NAVY. By HOLLOWAY H. FROST. Annapolis: United States Naval Institute. 1929. $4.

This is the newest chronicle of the American Navy, covering the period from the beginning of the Revolutionary War to the Algiers expedition by Decatur in 1815. It is rather old straw to thresh over again, and it is not clear for what purpose it was written and published. Commander Frost has been known as an able writer on naval topics for the Naval Institute publications and has made careful critical studies of the naval engagements of the Great War, notably the battle of Jutland.

In this work, however, he seems to be setting out to write in a "popular" style, which strikes one reviewer at least as unworthy of him and of the subject—unless the book is aimed only at boys of the junior high school age. Possibly the idea was to write a story of the navy that might appeal to the many and offset the general sentiment for a reduction of armaments. But it has the irritating, forced informality of a Y. M. C. A. secretary. It is peppered with exclamation points, and the language is colloquial to the point of slang: "What do?" "Let's go!" "A real showdown." An exploit becomes a "stunt" and so on. The heading of a chapter narrating the death of Somers reads, "Somers Finishes in Style."

There is also too much of the old-time patriotic historian exulting in "Yankee gunnery—the best in the world," or the success of "Yankee tricks." We should be past that. Another old-fashioned note is the plentiful sprinkling of quotations from authors of every age and clime. They don't do any good in the story. And, although naval men do not love Mr. Hughes for putting through the Washington Conference, we wish that the author could have refrained from his little dig at that gentleman's expense.

All of this tends to cheapen the careful, serious work that underlay the writing. The best points in the book are those in which Mr. Frost diverges from the traditional and criticizes both Bainbridge and Macdonough. Right or wrong, this is original and refreshing. But the general impression one receives from the book is that naval men still are orthodox in the gospel according to Mahan; namely, that national safety lies only in preparedness, preparedness means a big navy, and the bigger the navy the better.

ART IN INDUSTRY. By *Charles R. Richards*. Macmillan.

THE NEW ARCHÆOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES. By *Camden M. Coburn*. Supplement by *George W. Gilmore*. Funk & Wagnalls.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GAMES. By *Emanuel Lasker*. Dutton. $3.50.

THE BOOK OF THE LONG BOW. Edited by *Robert P. Elmer* and *Charles Allen Smart*. Doubleday, Doran.

THE STUDENTS SPEAK OUT. New Republic.

THE ROMANCE OF A BOOKSHOP. By *Gilbert H. Toris*. Privately printed.

HUNTING SKETCHES. By *Anthony Trollope*. Mitchell. $2.

SHOOTING BY MOOR, FIELD, AND SHORE. By *Eric Parker*. Lippincott. $7.

THE ART OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER. By *E. Drummond Young*. Lippincott. $6.

SHORT SCENES FROM SHAKESPEARE. By *Isabel McReynolds Grey*. Macmillan. $1.60.

WHY ENGLISH SOUNDS CHANGE. By *Janet Rankin Aiken*. Ronald Press. $2.50.

THE ADVENTURES OF MAYA THE BEE. By *Waldemar Bonsels*. Boni. $3.

AMERICA IN THE FORTIES. Translated and edited by *Gunnar J. Malmin*. University of Minnesota Press. $2.50.

AN ECONOMIC CHRONICLE OF THE GREAT WAR FOR GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND. By *U. B. Dearle*. Oxford.

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC LIBRARY. By *Arthur E. Bostwick*. Appleton. $3.

THE HISTORY OF HITCHIN. By *Reginald L. Hine*. London: Allen & Unwin.

WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT. By *Edward Coley Birge*. Green Farms, Conn. Writers Publishing Co.

ELIZABETHAN SHELTON TAPESTRIES. By *John Humphreys*. Oxford University Press. $4.

BOOKBINDING. By *William F. Matthews*. Dutton. $2.75.

THE STORY OF FAY HOUSE. By *Christina Hopkinson Baker*. Harvard University Press. $2.

THE STORY OF THE TRUTH SEEKER. By *George E. Macdonald*. New York: Truth Seeker Co. $3.

A GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON. Compiled by *Henry George Liddell* and *Robert Scott*. Revised and augmented by *Henry Stuart Jones*. Part IV. Oxford University Press. $3.50.

PORCELAIN PAGODAS AND PALACES OF JADE. By *A. E. Grantham*. Dutton. $5.

SPECULATION. By *Augustus Poole* and *Walter J. Buckett*. Farrar & Rinehart. $1.35 net.

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*

THE interest of M. McA., San Francisco, California, in the fate of Lady Reed, consort of Sir John, calls out the following from E. B., Buffalo, Wyoming, the onlie begetter of the tomahtoes saga:

Sticking exactly to history, while Sir John was teaching Bowman the correct pronunciation of tomatoes, Lady Reed was just setting into the poker game and was doing all right, but when she saw Sir John gallop past yelling tomahtoes, she cashed in her chips and followed him to camp. No woman ever deserted an Englishman.

Lady Reed's name was Rose. Sir John pronounced it Rowse, which is much softer. She was pretty, indeed she was, a complexion like a white rose tinged with pink. To conform to modern day standards she would have to take on a little spinach, but not much. They always went to the frontier dances. Sir John would get tired two or three o'clock, then he would squeeze up through a seething mob as close as he could get to her and bawl out, "Rowse, Rowse, Oh Rowse, let's go hum!" And off she would glide, wrapped in some cowboy's arms. Seeing that this is an addition to modern American history, I must add that Sir John's Guide, Bill Bloss, was chief of scouts in the Reil rebellion.

Always glad to answer any inquiries about Sir John and Lady Reed. I hope M. McA. will rest easy now.

This correspondence with *E. B., Buffalo, Wyoming*, is one of the reasons why the Guide fears not the postman's knock. You never can tell what may be in the Guide's mail. Nor, for that matter, where it may be coming from; in the past month it has had calls for advice from New South Wales, Australia; Yokohama, Japan; Paris, Berlin, the Philippines, Italy, the Riviera, Poland, the Pacific Coast, and, of course, all corners of the U. S. A. One of the British calls was in the hope that some reader of the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, which suspended publication during the war, but published in 1925 an issue with the date January, 1922, and then gave up the ghost, might have a copy of this issue containing an article on "Art and Imitation," by the Reverend Claude Williamson, St. Mary of the Angels, London W2. He would like to see this work of his in print, and if a copy is somewhere about, pray let him know.

L. W. S., Erie, Pa., asks for a book for a beginner in astrology.

I GATHER from the rest of the letter that I have been recommended to this reader as an authority on this subject. It is, however, one on which I must take all my information at hearsay. They tell me that the works of Evangeline Adams are the best for a beginner: "Astrology: Your Place in the Sun" (Dodd, Mead), which has many maps and diagrams, and "The Bowl of Heaven" (Dodd, Mead). All I can say from my own reading of them is that there is every evidence that the author believes it. If I seem to shy off from the subject, it is because I have recently witnessed the fate of Dr. Faustus, as shown in the performance of the play of that name, by the Norwich Players, in the Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral. "Let us dispute again," he says (to the devil, take notice), "and argue of divine astrology," and though his Good Angel murmurs brokenly, "Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art," he keeps right on and the last you see of him is going down quick into as red a Hades as ever shone through a trap-door. It was a beautiful performance, this of the company playing without an actor's name mentioned on the program or in the newspaper accounts, thus carrying out the custom of dedicating personal glory to the cause of religion and of art, which was revived last year in the performance of Masefield's "Coming of Christ" in the very nave of the Cathedral itself. This year the production of Marlowe's tragedy of thought was, as indicated, in the ancient Chapter House; in the Precincts, before the great door, "Everyman" was given by daylight on a rough stage of trestles, with the first person of the Trinity appearing in a window high overhead to speak the lines that usually come disembodied from off-stage. This summer's experience will, I hope, fix these productions into an annual event; the crowd was reverent, breathlessly attentive, and so great that the box-office manager (who slid me in by some managerical sleight of hand when all the seats had been sold out for a week) told me that every performance could have been given three times over to a full house. There was choral and orchestral music in the Cathedral, so important that the leading critics spent the week there, and "serenades" of stringed instruments in the cloisters, and altogether the Canterbury Festival made such an impression that I advise Americans making their plans for an August in England next year to write in advance for places.

Returning to my astrological muttons, the nearest I come in actual experience to forecasting the future or determining my own conditions by means of a book is by the flippant but disconcerting works of Doris Webster and Mary Hopkins, of which "I've Got Your Number" (Century) was the first, lately followed by "Tell Your Own Fortune" (Century). Their method is to present the truth-seeker with groups of questions such as "Is your watch usually right?" or, "Do dogs obey you?", which, when answered *yes* or *no*, produce a key number that you look up and find yourself described. It's not only not fair but no good to give yourself the benefit of the doubt in answering these questions; I did it on just one point and threw the result a mile wide of what I admitted to be the facts. So I went back and did it over, and the description was pretty good. This is disconcerting because it puts one more crack in your fond belief that you do as you please.

MORE boys continue to be entered for the "fine fellows in fiction" award. *W. H. P., Schenectady, N. Y.*, asks "How do you like Ethel Sidgwick's boys—Jamesie, of course, and the two in 'Laura'?" *B. L. B., London*, suggests Kenneth Grahame's "Golden Age" and "Dream Days." My own entry is Penrod: he may not be a hero and he was certainly implacable in the matter of being called a little gentleman, but he does embody some of the basal requirements of a fine fellow, as American boys of his time and place set them down in their unwritten laws.

K. M. H., Madison, Wis., says that inquirer for one act-plays suitable for ru dramatic groups should be told about success of the plays of Mary Kather Reely when given by rural amateurs.

MISS REELY is one of the faculty of the Wisconsin State Library School, and the Reader's Guide remembers with keen satisfaction her little plays that appeared some years ago in pamphlet form, published by Wilson of University Avenue—"The Lean Years" and "A Window to the South." These are indeed out of the ordinary; the former is based on the sound truth that young people who have not lived through years when every saved penny counted, often cannot understand the parental attitude to the spending of money; I remember its opening scenes involve a kind of coffee, the Lion Brand it was, that in my younger days was popular with brides in love with their husbands and determined to bring them on in the world; it tasted like nothing human but it cost less than coffee ever did before or since. "A Window to the South" is a bleak little study of a shut-in life that might have been saved by cutting through a wall. K. M. H. says that Miss Reeley's "Trails" has just been successfully given in the tournament conducted by the Wisconsin Dramatic Guild, an organization, it may be remembered, that gave us Zona Gale's "Neighbors," published in one of the two volumes of their plays (Viking). Other plays they have found valuable for church audiences include Marie A. Foley's "The Gift," Synge's "Riders to the Sea," and Eugene Pillot's "Hunger"; for rural groups, Allen A. Harris's "Old Walnut," C. W. Bush's "One Year to Make Good," and Calista Clark's "Dreams."

I HAVE found the prize quotation for a library, provided by no less an authority than Mr. Stanley Baldwin, until recently Prime Minister of England. Whenever he talks about books in public what he says is altogether charming and uncramped, and when lately he was talking about principles to be observed in their choice, he said that the best inscription for a library wall would be that chosen by an eager young warrior for his destroyer, *Ut veniant omnes*. This, I submit, is in the right vein. It is also considerate on the stone-cutter. Of course, if it must be in English it works out as "Let them all come," or, keeping the tone, "Bring 'em on!"

(*Continued on next page*)

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The Reader's Guide

(*Continued from preceding page*)

R. F. M., St. Louis, Mo., is interested in learning something about Frederick Delius, the English composer, in whose honor Sir Thomas Beecham recently conducted a Delius Festival in England, and asks if there are other books about him besides Heseltine's, and whether this is a biography or critical study.

THERE are two books: "Frederick Delius," by Philip Heseltine, published in England by John Lane, a biography with critical appreciations of his work, which is treated in detail; and "Delius," by Robert H. Hull, a critical study intended to supplement and discuss the earlier book; this is one of the Hogarth Essays originally published by Leonard and Virginia Woolf at their own press. I am glad to see that both these books say of his composition for small orchestra, "On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring," that it might be taken as the epitome of his whole life's work, for this was my own introduction to Delius. I heard it on my daughter's phonograph in Chelsea—and within the first ten minutes (for I kept it going longer than that) I knew that to the last day of my life, as long as I can entertain an idea, the idea of England will take shape for me in that music, just as the idea of Paris will take shape in the Madeleine rising though a Spring twilight, or London in a mental picture of Trafalgar Square with pigeons drifting down from the roofs of the National Gallery. Through Mr. Heseltine's admirable book one learns not only that the greatest living English composer—yes, I do know about Elgar—was born in as unlikely a spot as Bradford in Yorkshire, but that he "found himself" in solitude in Florida, was greatly helped by the friendship of a Brooklyn organist, and started to earn his living by music in Danville, Va. I was also interested in the fact that his first home in Paris was near the Lion of Belfort, where I thought I had been the only English-speaking resident.

As the book goes only to 1923, it does not tell you that Delius, now quite blind and almost entirely paralyzed, goes on composing by dictation as sweetly as ever, in the south of France. I did not mind missing the Lord Mayor's Show, even if this year he was a printer, but I did take it hard that I could not stay to see all England's music-lovers turn out to honor a national benefactor who was to be brought across in a wheel-chair. I wish I could have witnessed a celebration conducted by a public so devoted to music that it *stands* every night, a thousand strong, at the Promenade Concerts, where the only promenading is done by shifting the weight from one hip to the other, to listen to an orchestral program three hours long. There are plenty of seats at the Proms, too, but the sight of those reverent devotees in the vast central standing-room convinces any visitor of the place of music in the scheme of things for the London taxpayer.

I. S., Jamestown, R. I., asks for books on prehistoric art, culture, and civilization, not for a course or thesis, but for information and pleasure; scholarliness is not barred out, but "I should prefer the type of book that does not take for granted that the reader understands the difference between Neozoic and Pre-Cambrian." Many illustrations are liked, and "Parkyn's 'Prehistoric Art' is an excellent example of what I want."

IT is not difficult to assemble a group of books that will deeply interest one whose acquaintance with the subject has been furthered by so valuable a work as "Introduction to the Study of Prehistoric Art," by E. A. Parkyn (Longmans, Green). G. F. MacCurdy's "Human Origins" (Appleton) is a comprehensive work in two volumes, the first comprising the Old Stone Age, the second the New Stone Age and the ages of bronze and of iron. It is for serious students, but will be found quite fascinating to hold one of these. "Prehistoric Man," by Jacques de Morgan (Knopf), is one of the volumes of the monumental "History of Civilization" series; it presents the industrial development and intellectual growth of primitive peoples; both of these books are well and freely illustrated. "Prehistory," by Miles C. Burkitt (Macmillan), is a massive and scholarly study of early cultures in Europe and the Mediterranean basin; the same author's "Our Early Ancestors" (Macmillan) is an introduction to the study of Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Copper Age cultures in Europe and adjacent regions, and he has enriched the Home University Library, published in this country by Holt, with an excellent little volume called "Our Forerunners." Let me once more remind the seeker of not too hard-to-get knowledge in any field, that a good plan is to look over the catalogue of the H. U. L. and see if it has not something on the subject; it will be simple without being overpopularized, brief, and by an authority. "Man and His Past," by O. G. S. Crawford (Oxford), is a distinguished contribution to anthropology. Along these lines should be mentioned, though it is not strictly speaking in the purview of this inquiry, the magnificent quarto volume of reproductions of "Bushman Paintings," copied by M. H. Tongue and published by the Oxford University Press. Two of the most popular books on the subject of prehistoric man, each the work of an authority, are "Men of the Old Stone Age," by Henry Fairfield Osborn, and "The New Stone Age in Modern Europe," by J. M. Tyler, both published by Scribner; if anyone doubts the general interest in this subject, let him examine the physical condition of these volumes after they have been subjected to say a year's strain in the reading-room of any large public library. There are two books that I must add to this list, though neither is of the type just described: "How to Observe in Archæology," a little book of suggestions for travellers in the Near and Middle East, prepared by the British Museum and published by the Oxford University Press, and a personal record quite as thrilling as any romance, "Primitive Hearths in the Pyrenees," by Ruth Sawtell and Ida Treat (Appleton). This is the sort of thing that makes stay-at-homes restless, thinking of what might be found by crawling up a cavern in the south of France.

C. B. H., Springfield, Ill., with a paper to prepare on "The Psychology of Dress" whose range is the nineteenth century, asks for documentation.

IF you have access to "Modes and Manners of the Nineteenth Century," by Max von Boehn (Dutton), the thing is as good as done, for this presents its subject in the most thorough-going manner, as set forth in the pictures and engravings of the time. This work, however, is in three volumes and costs twenty dollars—this is no barrier to enthusiasts on costume-plate collecting, as anyone who knows them knows. Another excellent source book would be Elizabeth McClellan's "Historic Dress in America," published by Macrae-Smith; the first and more expensive volume goes from 1607 to 1800, the second from 1800 to 1870, which would give you a good start on your paper; indeed, I would be glad of an excuse to go lightly on the 'eighties in feminine dress. An inexpensive book is "American Costume," by Eudora Sellner, published by the School Arts Magazine Co., Worcester, Mass.; this gives forty-eight costumes with color notation, covering 150 years of style in America, from 1775 to 1925. One might go at this paper by way of the collection of costumes preserved in Washington, described in several books—such as the admirable history of the city for young people, "Washington, D. C.; the Nation's Capital," by F. M. Fox and others (Rand McNally)—and in detail in a little book published by the author, 1410 20th Street, Washington; "Costumes of Mistresses of the White House." Or one might, with plenty of time and money, produce something like the scrap-book I saw last year in Milwaukee, where the mother of my hostess had collected one perfect fashion-plate for each year of the nineteenth century and had the whole bound as a treasure-house of the mode.

For the first years of our country the dress-book longest in favor has been Alice Morse Earle's "Costume of Colonial Times," quite recently reprinted by Scribner and by the World Book Company. Now, however, a new volume has just been added to the valuable series called the Century Library of American Antiques, in which Edward Warwick and Henry Pitz present "Early American Costume" (Century) in as accurate and interesting a manner as that used for the earlier volumes on glass, furniture, and pottery. This book has plenty of pictures, and will be a boon not only to the social historian, but to anyone putting colonial scenes upon the stage for an audience at all critical.

P. G. N., New York, asks for advice on sunlight treatment for babies.

"THE Care of the Child," by Alton Goldbloom (Longmans, Green) has a chapter on sunlight with a sun-exposure chart; this is the latest advice on a subject just now of special interest to parents. *G. F. S., librarian of Adelbert College Library, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, O.,* asks if there is any chance of a reprinting of Harrison Rhodes's "A Gift Book for My Mother" (Harper), in the near future, saying that it should be on the same shelf with little classics such as Barrie's "Margaret Ogilvy," Gosse's "Father and Son," and "Daisy Miller." He thinks that there would be a steady demand for it in his part of Ohio.

The Compleat Collector.

RARE BOOKS · FIRST EDITIONS · FINE TYPOGRAPHY

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Limited Editions

THE announcements of books for the autumn and winter of this year brought forth several publishing ventures which were a bit out of the ordinary manner of book publishing, not by reason of their novelty as books or as limited editions, but because for the first time it was seriously proposed to publish fine editions *en masse* and for a wide group of readers. One of these ventures I propose to deal with in the same manner—the books from the Department of Limited Editions of Doubleday, Doran & Co. Not quite realizing the strength of the onrushing stream of these volumes, I have already treated of the Conrad Library, and "Zadig." Three other volumes have not came to hand; of the remaining four of the nine apparently already published, something can be written.

This publishing venture inevitably challenges comparison with the famous Riverside Press Editions which first brought Bruce Rogers into fame—but the comparison is not quite fair. Mr. Rogers's books were printed in a more leisurely day, and they were done by the one supreme typographic artist which America has produced. It seems unlikely that his series of printed books will ever be surpassed. New manners and new men have come along, and the publishing field is broad enough to accommodate the printing of fine books on a scale quite unthinkable twenty years ago. So let us look at the current work.

THE VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES OF COLUMBUS. By WASHINGTON IRVING. Foreword by VAN WYCK BROOKS and a decoration by EDWARD A. WILSON. Printed by the Lakeside Press under direction of William A. Kittredge.

The "Voyages and Discoveries" manifests that desire to make a book imposing by bulk which might better have been more restrained. It is curious that with the restricted shelf room which confronts the modern occupant of flat and small house, there comes a desire on the part of publishers to make thick books. The English have offended very greatly with their esparto paper volumes; it would seem to me that thick paper and bevelled edge boards are unnecessarily burdensome to owners who must find room for such books on the shelf.

The "Voyages" is printed—and very well printed indeed—in monotype Caslon, on Normandy paper. There is a good title-page set in Caslon and black letter, with a brave decoration. The very large black letter initials on the chapters seem quite out of scale—if they had been printed in red it would have been an improvement. It can be said of Mr. Kittredge's treatment that it makes for a very readable book, since the type is large and well leaded, and the paper is pleasant to handle and to read from.

At this date there is little to be said for Irving's work which has not already been said. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks contributes a Foreword, and if any excuse were needed for this reprinting it may be found in his observation that Irving may well be surpassed in erudition by future writers, "but can hardly be excelled in human feeling and romantic enthusiasm." For the general reader, wanting to know about the less known activities of the early explorers of New Spain, human feeling and romantic enthusiasm are more important than erudition—provided always that the essential truth is told.

The binding is in bright red cloth, with black labels on shelf-back and front cover—a striking combination well worked out. The volume is, when all is said, a handsome library edition.

PUNCH AND JUDY. With twenty-eight illustrations by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK, With a Foreword by TONY SARG and a Bibliographical Note by ANNE LYON HAIGHT. Printed by the Merrymount Press.

Mr. Updike has elected to print this little volume in the style of the early nineteenth century, using his excellent fonts of Scotch Roman type, and within the limits of that rather shrinking style he has achieved a fairly satisfactory book. What the book lacks is robustness—but that was the fault of all printing in the doldrums of the era he has reproduced. There is, however, this to be said for his book, that it is compact, unostentatious, and pleasant to handle, and these are virtues not too apparent in much modern work.

The illustrations are very carefully printed line-blocks sharp and quite unsmudged. The paper is soft and flexible; indeed, the minutiæ of bookmaking have been attended to with scrupulous care.

The binding is the choicest feature of the book. A soft, ecru sheet of "wild" paper has been used for the sides, with a brick-red cloth back with paper label. The printing on the label is decorated simply with two old-fashioned dashes—and that is all. But if any more attractive or fitting binding has been achieved lately I have not seen it. The book is worth putting on one's shelf for that alone!

THE CHASE. A Poem by WILLIAM SOMERVILE, Esq. Introduction by J. HENRY HIGGINSON. Printed by Richard W. Ellis at the Georgian Press.

Mr. Ellis has done this book in an approved eighteenth-century style, the shape a tall octavo, the type Baskerville of the monotype cutting. The result is that the book depends partly on the validity of the adopted style, and partly upon the skill with which the Bewick blocks have been printed from zinc reproductions. As to the former, it may be said that it is a good style. The book is readable and attractive to look at, and the type is one of the best.

As to the printing much may be said in praise. I understand from the publishers' circular that the paper was dampened before printing, and this method has enabled the printer to preserve a sharpness in his illustrations which otherwise he could not have obtained. The printing of such photo-zinc reproductions is no easy matter, but Mr. Ellis seems to have retained much of the quality of the original wood blocks. If the style lacks originality, the book can stand up by reason of its workmanship.

THE PINE FURNITURE OF EARLY NEW ENGLAND. By RUSSELL HAWES KETTELL. Printed by the Marchbanks Press.

Mr. Kettell's book on "Pine Furniture" is the most interesting of these limited editions so far issued—and I say this with due regard to the extraordinary vogue of the antique, especially the antique of New England, at the present time. Without in any way attempting to compare this book with others of somewhat similar nature, for I have only the most cursory knowledge of early American furniture, it seems to me a very fine piece of bookmaking.

The book is built up around the pictures, of which there are two hundred and twenty-nine reproductions of photographs, and fifty-five measured drawings. Now the orderly presentation of such material is a severe tax on any book designer, and would, in the ordinary procedure, involve a heavy book on coated paper, or else the use of offset or gelatine reproductions. Whether such reproductions would be better than the half-tones which are employed for the photographic facsimiles is an open question; but there can be no question that the printing of the half-tones on uncoated paper is highly successful. It seems to me that no essential details have been lost, and that in selection of paper and skill of printing, Mr. Marchbanks has done a thoroughly competent piece of work. The line plates of measured drawings are very well rendered. If they lack a little of the feeling which the best drawings of this class should have, they are at all events clean, carefully placed within the rule borders, and beautifully printed. The binding, in complete harmony with the subject, is in stout buckram, with labels on side and shelf-back.

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WHAT is to be said of these limited editions as a whole? Do they measure up to the commonly accepted standards of such editions?

I am afraid that the term "limited edition" has suffered the fate of all words and expressions which start with a high and ambitious purpose, and then, in the sweat and hurry of the market, tend to lose their original and rather special meaning, and to take on new implications.

The four volumes under review are, as we understand the term, well printed. They all have certain agreeable qualities, and they will stand comparison with pretty much all of our current product. They cannot stand comparison with such work as the Riverside "Song of Roland," or with Mr. St. John Hornby's work at the Ashendene Press. The best printing demands more time in planning and execution, the use of better paper, of original engravings on wood or metal, and of much more imagination in design than these books show.

I do not wish to detract in any way from the interest which one may legitimately show in these volumes; they are well conceived and well done. R.

FROM THE MAUVE DECADE

THIRTY-FIVE years ago one of the pleasures of life in the country was the receipt each winter of the current "Münchener Kalender." For many years, however, I had never seen one, until a vain effort to find them in the Yale Library prompted the late Professor Gruener to give a large number to the University's book collection. Later, some twenty odd numbers came my way, bringing their flavor of Germany—and Münchener. The earliest number I have is that for 1886; when the series started I do not know. Possibly some reader of The Compleat Collector will be able to supply the information. But to my joy, a friend just returned from Germany, and knowing my liking for these very Teutonic publications, has now brought me the good old familiar pamphlet for the year 1930. It is the same Kalender, better printed, but still redolent of romanticism and beer. A large double-page spread of the coat of arms of Achille Ratti, Pope Pius XI, done in the usual vigorous style, comes first, and then follow the coats of arms of a dozen German families.

In this connection, the catalogue of French and German books issued by B. Westermann & Co., 13 West 46th Street, New York (who have taken over the French Department of Dutton's), lists twenty-five current German almanacks and calendars. R.

The first book to be published by the new printing works of the Holy See in Vatican City is the "Index of Prohibited Books," containing in 565 pages a list of about 5,000 books which Catholics are not allowed to read.

"Oxford Nearly Revisited"

IT is part of the charm of Oxford that it can stand the disillusions of experience better than any other college. If one goes there to see medieval buildings, and is confronted with Restoration masonry; if one "crosses the stripling Thames at Bablock Hithe" and meets reality o' nights in a beastly hedge tavern—still the immemorial calm of Oxford maintains its hold on one's affections. So, too, with poetry—it is only poor poetry which is ruined by parody, or which does not sooner or later arrest the hand of the parodist.

So much for preface, because Mr. McCord's poem, first printed in the "Conning Tower" of the New York *World*, almost starts off with an anti-climax, pursues its parodying way to an abrupt absurdity, always with something more than a reminiscence of "The Scholar Gypsy," the "patient and lovely stanzas" which to others than the author are inseparable from Oxford. And if the "Oxford Nearly Revisited" hovers on the edge of laughter, it also stirs laughter's opposite—and takes its place with Lang's most unforgettable poem on Oxford and St. Andrews, and Louise Guiney's Nine Sonnets.

There is felicity in the printing of this poem, for what more fitting choice than that delectable Dutch letter which Bishop Fell gave to the young Press, to captivate a book lover? There are initials and head bands and so forth, not very closely related to one another, but all living together in amity. Even the very post-Reformation cygnet, forsaking the Charles for the Isis, sails serenely on the title-page. It is a slightly ridiculous swan, with its outspread wings. Perhaps I make myself ridiculous, too—but you imbibe freely of Oxford and Fell type and see what happens when such a bewitching chit of a book comes tripping on your desk!

It is published by the Cygnet Press at Cambridge, printed on hand-made paper by the Oxford University Press, and sells for three dollars. R.

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P. P. A.
Patron Saint of Cross Word Puzzles, and Now Revealed As the Ace of Anagrammists

The Inner Sanctum's columnar neighbor rises in his *Conning Tower* to declare that *The Anagram Book* of SILAS FRANK SEADLER incorrectly attributes to DOROTHY PARKER a master-stroke of the anagrammist's art that was rightfully his —to wit, the capturing of "POINT" with a "K" to make the memorable and disputed —"INKPOT."

The claim of the agéd bard has not yet been fully investigated by all the Nabobs and Grand Emirs of the Eighth Lively Art [second series]. An unofficial referendum of the Best Minds, however, clearly indicates that perhaps the first of the crusaders who made Park Row and Park Avenue anagram-conscious as far back as 1923 were F. P. A. and MARGARET LEECH. To them, as to Alexander Woollcott and to FRANCOIS MARIE AROUET [who, by an heroic feat of anagramming, turned his family name into VOLTAIRE] *The Inner Sanctum* makes grateful obeisance.

A man who lost more than a million dollars in the Wall Street panic recently acknowledged a copy of *The Anagram Book* with this statement:

> *Thanks for* SI SEADLER'S *book. It's just what I needed. I expect to make good use of the pencil.*

These are the days when the itinerant authors come back to *The Inner Sanctum:* ABBÉ ERNEST DIMNET, WALTER B. PITKIN, JOHN COWPER POWYS, WILL DURANT, ROBERT L. RIPLEY, and J. P. MCEVOY are among the returned pilgrims. WILLIAM BOLITHO is still in Chicago, probably seeking a *thirteenth against the Gods* . . . and EDDIE CANTOR is still *Making Whoopee* on the road.

The Inner Sanctum is almost entirely lined with books. It is perhaps revealing an office secret to announce that during Old Home Week for authors, the most popular of them all is a black loose-leaf book containing the weekly and daily sales reports. For the seven days ending last Saturday, this jubilant volume proclaimed such totals as these: [*Will the secretary of the* GARDEN CITY *Thousand-A-Week Club please copy?*]

Wolf Solent	282
Twelve Against the Gods	2,655*
The Art of Thinking	3,526
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The Mansions of Philosophy	591
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FIRST, this week, we wish to acknowledge some Christmas cards received: from *Harriet Monroe*, from *Ada Russell*, from *Jessie Rittenhouse* and *Clinton Scollard*, from *Ednah Crosby Farrier* of Putnam's, from *Mary Rose Himler* of the Bobbs-Merrill Company, from *Clifford* and *Margaret Gessler*, from *Marguerite E. De Witt* (visiting lecturer at Vassar College), from *Helen* and *Mason Trowbridge* (consisting of a certified copy of the special meeting of the Trowbridge family on December 25th,) and also a Merry Mouse Christmas card to *O'Reilley* from his Bostonian mouse friend, Hank. . . .

Percy Crosby has sent up a grand set of pictures of *Skippy* as well as a beautiful lithograph of one of his pictures of dancers; and *Oliver S. Hawes* has been kind enough to send us a reprint of "Ebrietatis Encomium," while *Alfred King* writes that his friend *William Kehller* of the Art Studio Press has a copy of the "Praise of Drunkenness," which, he thinks, is the same book. We think so too. . . .

We thank most sincerely all these sundry benefactors. We also thank *Louis Untermeyer* for a postcard of the temple at Segesta. He writes on it:

> All that our Adirondack farm needs is a Greek temple, so we came to Segesta. But the one they showed us is an old Doric model quite shop—and weather-worn. So we're looking further—to Syracuse, Sicily, *not* N. Y.

An odd book comes to us from Random House. It is *Parson Weems* on Marriage, Drink, and Adultery, with an introduction and bibliographical notes by *Mrs. Roswell Skeel, Jr.* and reproductions of the original frontispiece plates. This is the first modern reprinting of three pamphlets that rank high as curiosities of American literature. The edition is limited to 1000 copies, and printed at the Harbor Press. . . .

Houghton Mifflin sent us round for a Christmas card "Advice to a Young Reviewer" by *Edward Copleston*, Bishop of Llandaff and Dean of St. Paul's 1828-1849. It is a quaintly recondite little book. . . .

To *Rosa E. Hutchinson* of The Macmillan Company we are indebted for the Christmas gift of *Edward Majoribanks's* "For the Defence," being the life of *Sir Edward Marshall Hall*, with an introduction by the *Rt. Honorable, The Earl of Birkenhead*. We have just dipped into the volume but what we have read has been of extraordinary interest. If you are fond of reading about notable trials you should most certainly add this book to your crime library. . . .

Farrar & Rinehart captured a good novel in "Young Man of Manhattan" by *Katharine Brush*. They also got an attractive jacket for it. Miss Brush has a great knack for reproducing the exact way in which young Americans talk. She tells an appealingly human story. . . .

Edwin Arlington Robinson has now turned sixty. Who would know he had reached that age, judging by his poetry? He has held it at a superbly high level and since his fiftieth birthday he has three times won the Pulitzer Prize and has published eight volumes. Moreover, he has edited "The Letters of Thomas Sergeant Perry" which came out this Fall. This next Spring the Macmillan Company will bring out "An Introduction to Edwin Arlington Robinson" by *Professor Charles Cestre* of the University of Paris. . . .

We are glad to see Harcourt, Brace announce another novel by *Liam O'Flaherty*, for the Spring. It is based on his experiences in the front lines during the War and is called "The Return of the Brute." Mr. O'Flaherty served as a private in the Irish Guards and was wounded at Passchendaele in 1917. . . .

And, to refer to Harcourt again, since publishing a children's book known as "Little Blacknose," by *Hildegarde Hoyt Swift* they have been receiving orders for "Little Blackhead," "Little Bluebeard," "Little Hildegarde," "Little Bluenose," and so on. . . .

Mazo de la Roche, the author of "Jalna," has discovered the beauty of a novel by a young Englishman. *H. E. Bates*. The book is brought out by the Viking Press who also published Mr. Bates's earlier work, being advised thereto by Edward Garnett. The title of the English writer's latest that Miss de la Roche likes so much is "Catherine Foster." . . .

John Carter, author of "Man is War" and "Conquest" is now associated with the State Department in Washington. . . .

A most attractive advertisement comes from Doubleday, Doran in the shape of a long "Handbill for the *Book Collector*," from the Department of Limited Editions. Doubleday, Doran seems to be doing very well with this new feature of the large combination publishing house. . . .

In a recent *Commonweal Padraic Colum* pays a graceful tribute to the late *Bliss Carman*. Which reminds us that *Professor Woodberry*, another veteran American poet, is reported as being crucially ill, for which we are very sorry indeed. . . .

John Dos Pasos has gone to Paris with his brand new wife. His new novel "The 42nd Parallel" will be published by Harper's in February. Dos also hopes to see his play, "Airways, Inc.," produced in Berlin or Munich. He will return to spend the summer at Provincetown. . . .

Richard Hughes's "The Innocent Voyage" has, under the title of "High Wind in Jamaica" already sold twenty-five thousand copies in England. It was also chosen by the English Book Club, a new organization with a small circulation. Translation rights of the book have been arranged for in Germany, France, Sweden, Denmark, and Czechoslovakia. . . .

Harold Lamb is back from a trip through Arabia where he never thought of locking his luggage. For the past year he has been plundering the East and the Near East for material for his new Spring book which will be "The Crusades: Iron Men and Saints." Doubleday, Doran will publish it. . . .

On Holt's February list is "Down in the Valley" by *H. W. Freeman*, author of "Joseph and His Brethren," which was the Book-of-the-Month Club choice for January 1929. The scene of the story is again laid in East Suffolk, but, unlike "Joseph" where the characters were all country people, the new book is a story of the effect of the soil upon a man from the city. . . .

An event of importance for collectors has been the recent publication by the Oxford University Press of "The *R. B. Adam* Library Relating to *Dr. Samuel Johnson* and his Era" which is no more or less than a catalogue of the greatest Johnsonian library in existence. Mr. Adam is a citizen of Buffalo, New York. The catalogue is in three large 8vo. volumes with upwards of eight hundred facsimile title-pages, letters and illustrations. The prize of it is seventy-five dollars. It bears an introduction by Dr. *C. G. Osgood* of Princeton, a preface by *A. Edward Newton*, and an article by *Professor Chauncey B. Tinker* of Yale. . . .

The Atlantic Bookshelf for December has an interesting article in it written by *Robert Buckner*, Advertising Manager for Doubleday, Doran, and *Robert Hunt*. It is entitled "What's to be Done about Book Advertising?" and contains some shrewd observation. . . .

The November number of *American Literature* is on our desk. There are such interesting articles in it as "Early Criticism of *Emily Dickinson*" and "*Ambrose Bierce* and the Civil War." It is published quarterly by the Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina. . . .

Schulte's Book Store, Inc., informs us that the price of the Cresset Press *Bunyan's* "Pilgrim's Progress," is $1240, that of the Kelmscott Press *Shakespeare's* "Sonnets," $75, and that of the Shakespeare Head Press *Yeats'* Complete Works, each volume inscribed by the author, $350. So we're going out to get a ham sandwich. . . .

William Edwin Rudge of 475 Fifth Avenue, draws our attention to *Lawrence Gilman's* "Music and the Cultivated Man," and to *Fernand Noziere's* "Three Gallant Plays," both of which he has recently brought out. The latter is in an edition of 1,000 copies at $7.50 each, and it is needless to say that in binding and typography the book is a treat to the eye. The Gilman book is an essay published originally in the columns of the New York *Herald Tribune*. It has been given a charming format. . . .

Business of bowing oneself out! . . .

THE PHOENICIAN.

The AMEN CORNER

Well, judging by some of the books we received for Christmas there are several of our friends who do not know what beautiful Oxford books we postponed buying in the hope that they would show the good taste to buy them for us! But flummery is the net that catches many of us in the awful rush of Christmas gift buying. Consequently, our bookshelves have added pounds that will never be weighed by our thoughts. For there are too many good books to lose much time with those that are not worth the companionship that comes of marking and rereading. However, we got out our copy of the *Oxford Book of Carols* (music edn)[1] and had great fun, so much, in fact, that our amused friends soon joined us in our vacillating moods from the divine to the hilarious. The little red book was a decided success. And we plan to repeat the festivity at Easter and use the *spring* section of this omnibus collection of carols.

Hymnophiles will find no small pleasure in the *Handbook of the Church Hymnary*,[2] and the Creator of the Universe surely must possess a sense of humor that was entirely lacking in Neal, whose religious zeal brought forth the following verse in his version of "All glory, laud, and honour":

> Be thou, O Lord, the rider,
> And we the little ass;
> That to God's holy city
> Together we may pass.

Those interested in hymns will find a pleasant miscellany in this volume.

Throughout the Christmas season there is to be a display of Books of Common Prayer[3] in the Oxford University Press Library (114 Fifth Ave.). Those who enjoy seeing old books and fine printing will find profit in a visit to this display. It includes a copy of the Prayer Book of 1637 known as Archbishop Laud's Book, King Edward the Seventh's Book of Common Prayer (1903), and others imprinted in 1662, 1747, 1760 and 1776.

> From ghosts and ghoules
> And four legged beastes
> Good Lord deliver us

has for many years been omitted from the Litany. The recently revised edition has such timely additions as a prayer for those who travel by air, and it omits in the marriage ceremony the bride's promise to *obey* her husband. The spirit throughout the revised form is that of greater simplicity and modernity of language.

Some few years ago an American scholar, searching in the Record Office, found by chance, documents dealing with the Coroner's inquest held on Christopher Marlowe and putting beyond all further mystery the facts, till then only guessed, of the poet's death. The present short study of Marlowe's life will be of the greatest use to those many readers who know odd things about him but have no clear view of his career. Was Marlowe stabbed because of "the reckoning?" A love affair? Or in some Secret Service plot? What had his past been like? What, exactly, was his "atheism"? All these questions Dr. Boas (who is a great Shakespearean expert) discusses in *Marlowe and his Circle*.[4] And he gives us a picture of dark and romantic figures moving through the perlious London of a perilous age.

Mr. Fripp's knowledge of local records, documents and traditions that pertain to Shakespeare is so exhaustive that he can write a new and private history of any place within ten miles of Stratford. This is, in effect, what he does in his new volume *Shakespeare's Haunts near Stratford*.[5] He takes certain places that have some connection with the poet and to give us delightful and informative gossip about the families and individuals who inhabited them when Shakespeare was a neighbor. Both this and his recent *Shakespeare's Stratford*[6] are worthy, and of those who like biography for the humanity of their approach and treatment.

The outstanding book of poetry this year, and probably of many generations, is *The Testament of Beauty* by Robert Bridges, Poet Laureate of England. The limited edition[7] printed by William Rudge and bound in Douglas Cockerell marble paper boards will delight your eyes for many readings. We understand that it is the best selling non-fiction. The regular edition[8] will be published the 16th of January. Order your copy now and plan to spend a week of evenings with this really great book.

Happy New Year!

—THE OXONIAN

(1) $2.50; (2) $2.50; (3) Newly revised edition from $.50 to $35.00; (4) $2.50; (5) $2.25; (6) $1.50; (7) $25.00, limited to 250 copies printed on Vidalon paper in Estienne type, (8) $3.50, probable price, also printed by Rudge.

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